

quæ amarulentia nota degustatio fa-  
ciunt: unica in perfecendo cruciata uni-  
versitate ac lenitate. Si osculo prodac-  
coarguit quidem, sed non percutit: si  
ito corripitur, ira exprobrat, ut tamen  
uatur: si zelo inflammatus Malchi au-  
gladio præcide  
: loco suo resti-  
ictus profugiat,  
lomicum adve-  
r, poposceris,  
: si latronem ob-  
n acceperis, eun-  
adifum introdu-  
risti benigna on-  
risti passiones: q-  
d majus ac præf-  
is mortem ipia-  
tulerit, nos con-  
las & injurias a-  
ius? Quin hæc c-  
n, atque etiam n-  
videte) de quit-  
e differui. Hi de-  
i: hi templa, ni-  
quod viva vive-  
imæ vivæ, holo-

ificia perfecta, Dii denique, Trinitatis  
ratæ beneficio. Hi populos habent, nos  
zelos: hi temeritatem & audaciam, nos  
timorem: hi minas, nos orationes: hi quod per-  
iunt, nos quod ferimus: hi aurum & ar-  
gentum, nos repurgatam doctrinam. Feci-  
mus igitur duplices & triplices contignatio-  
nes (agnosce Scripturæ verba) domum  
fragilem, fenestris distinctam: at hæc  
domus fide mea sublimiora sunt, nec coe-  
lam ad quos tendo. At mihi grex exiguus?  
in præcipitia non fertur. At angusta mi-  
nistratio? sed quæ lupis non pateat, sed quæ  
feram non admittat, nec a furibus, & ex-  
tra transcendatur. Nec dubito quin eam  
quoque latiore aliquando visurus sim.  
Multos enim ex his, qui nunc in luporum  
mero sunt, inter oves, ac fortasse etiam

# THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH



ST. AUGUSTINE  
TRACTATES ON THE  
GOSPEL OF JOHN

1-10

Translated by John W. Rettig

δι' ὧν τὸ πικραν ρευσθὶν ἐξερραπεν-  
της ἐν τῷ πάθῃ μακροθυμίας  
τι προδοθῇ. ἐλέγχει μὲν, ὡς πλῆ-  
ᾶφνω συλληφθῇ, ἐνοειδίζῃ μὲν, ἐπ-  
μαχαίρα Μάλχῃ τέμνης τὸ ἀν-

ἀποκαλῆσθαι  
ἡσελεῖ κα-  
: ἐς ἀγωνίας  
διὰ κακίαν.  
εἰσαῖξ' δια-  
λανθροῦσθαι,  
-ῶ παθημα-  
Θεῷ καὶ θά-  
ομοίοις μηδ-  
-ρὸς δὲ καὶ  
ῶμαι, καὶ σ-  
ὶ πολλὰ κ-  
τοι τὰς οἰκ-  
-ς, ἡμεῖς τὸν  
ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ-  
μαῖα λογι-  
ἀδ' ὡς προ-

ἔτοι δῆμος, ἡμεῖς ἀγγέλος. ἔ-  
πίσω ἡμεῖς. ἔτοι τὸ ἀπειλεῖν, ἡ-  
εὐχεσθαι. ἔτοι τὸ βάλλειν, ἡμε-  
ἔτοι χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον, ἡμεῖς  
θαυμένον. ἐποίησας σεαυτῷ διώ-  
ροφα; γινώθι τὰ ῥήματα τὰ γε-  
πιστὸν, διεσπάλμενον θυρίσιν, ἀλλ-  
τὴ ἐμῆς πίσεως ὑψηλότερα καὶ τ-  
ῶς φέρομαι. μικρὸν μοι τὸ ποι-  
ἐπὶ κρημνῶν φερόμενον. σενή μ-  
πλὴν λύκοις ἀνεπίστα, π-  
δεχομένη ληστῶν, καὶ ὑπερβαίνο-  
καὶ ξένοις. ὥφθονα ταύτην εὐο-  
τυτέραν, πολλὰ καὶ τῶν νυκτ-  
βάτοικ ἀνθροῦσθαι με δεῖ τυχόν

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# ST. AUGUSTINE

## TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 1 – 10

*Translated by*

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Cincinnati, Ohio*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- ACW Ancient Christian Writers. New York, New York/Mahwah, New Jersey: Newman Press, 1946-.
- BA Bibliothèque augustinienne. Oeuvres de saint augustin. Paris 1936-.
- BAC Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. Madrid, 1946-.
- CCD Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. Translations of the Old and New Testaments.
- CCL Corpus Christianorum Series Latina. Turnhout, 1953-.
- CSEL Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. Vienna, 1866-.
- DACL *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*. Paris, 1907-1953.
- DDC *De Doctrina Christiana*.
- DThC *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*. Paris, 1935-.
- En in Ps *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.
- FOTC The Fathers of the Church. New York and Washington, D.C., 1947-.
- JBC *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Ed R. Brown, J. Fitzmyer, R. Murphy. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968.
- JThS *Journal of Theological Studies*.
- LF A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church. Ed. E. B. Pusey, J. Keble, and J. H. Newman. Oxford, 1837-1861.
- LNPF A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace. Buffalo and New York, 1888. Rep. 1956.
- LXX *Septuagint*. Ed. A. Rahlfs. 2 vols. Stuttgart, 1935.
- NAB *The New American Bible*. Patterson, New Jersey, 1970.
- NBA Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana. Rome, 1965-.
- NCE *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York, 1967.
- ODCC<sup>2</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. 2d ed. Ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone. Oxford, 1984.
- PG Migne, J.-P., ed. *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca*. Paris, 1857-1866.
- PL Migne, J.-P., ed. *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*. Paris, 1878-1890.
- RAug *Recherches augustinienes*.
- REAug *Revue des études augustinienes*.

- RSR *Recherches de science religieuse.*  
SC Sources chrétiennes. Paris, 1942—.  
SPM Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia 1. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Sermones selecti duodeviginti.* Ed. C. Lambot. Utrecht, 1950.  
TLL Thesaurus Linguae Latinae. Leipzig, 1900—.  
*Tr in*  
*Io Ep* *Tractates on the First Epistle of John.*  
*VigC* *Vigiliae Christianae.*

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- . *De Doctrina Christiana*. CCL 32. Ed. J. Martin (1962); FOTC 5.19-235. Tr. J. Gavigan (1947).
- . *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. CCL 38-40. Ed. E. Dekkers and J. Fraipont (1956); ACW 29 and 30 (Psalms 1-37). Tr. Dame S. Hebbin and Dame F. Corrigan (1960, 1961).
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# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION



JOHN THE EVANGELIST was an eagle, soaring high in the sky into the sun;<sup>1</sup> Augustine was the Lord's trumpet,<sup>2</sup> proclaiming the gospel and blaring forth its meaning. John's Gospel is a profound theological study of Christ's divinity; Augustine's *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV* are a prolonged pastoral investigation of that profundity. In them, Augustine, the world-renowned bishop of Hippo Regius, the humble pastor of souls, seeks to peer into the depths of Johannine theology and rise to the heights of Johannine illumination, that the shepherd might reveal to his sheep, as far as God granted, the meaning of John's Gospel. For Augustine, however, preaching, and the scriptural exegesis that was a necessary part of preaching, were the truly important theological activities, more important, perhaps, than the more formal treatises.<sup>3</sup> It is his congregation that receives the primary benefit of his constant and untiring exercise of his pastoral responsibilities.

(2) John the Evangelist was also a mountain,<sup>4</sup> lofty, ascending to the source of all light, to God himself, bringing God's Word, peace, and justice, to human souls disordered by sin. To see an eagle or a mountain we must lift up our eyes; and lifting up our eyes from the earth to which we are bound, we see beyond the eagle and beyond the mountain to the un-

1. See Preface by an Unknown Author, *Tractates* 15.1, 36.1 and 5, 40.1. Cf. *Tractate* 19.5. See also S. Poque, *Le langage symbolique dans la prédication d'Augustin d'Hippone* (Paris, 1984) 1.334-335.

2. See *Epistula* 32.3 (PL 33.128; CSEL 34 (1).10-11; and FOTC 12.119).

3. DDC 4.3.4. See also J. Pelikan, "Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount" in *The Preaching of Augustine* (Philadelphia, 1973), vii-xi; and F. Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop*, tr. B. Battershaw and G. Lamb (New York, 1961), 412-452.

4. See *Tractates* 1.2-6, 2.3. On the metaphor of the mountain in Augustine's sermons see Poque, *Le langage*, 1.308-311.

bounded heavens and to the sun, the source of light, and peace, and justice for us. "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains from where help will come to me. My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth."<sup>5</sup> The mountain is an intermediary between us, the depths of the earth, and God, the height of heaven. A mountain is impressive; we admire it, we feel lowly before it. But the mountain is only a means, it is only a way, it is not the goal. It is God who is our goal and the source of all help to reach that goal. Our eyes must ever be fixed on that goal. This is a theme that Augustine never ceases to repeat, again and again, in the *Tractates*.

(3) John the Evangelist was also a lamp,<sup>6</sup> giving forth his light that others might see. But a lamp is not the source of its own light; it must be lighted by another. The Word, Christ, is the source of its light and is the light which lights. The lamp receives light that it may enlighten; it is an intermediary. The Word is our true light and he is an inner light,<sup>7</sup> an interior master,<sup>8</sup> who is the ultimate giver of illumination. To receive this inner light we must open ourselves to God and this we do through love. But our fallen, disordered nature loves the wrong things—ourselves and external objects. Grace is ever present, but we are closed to it. It is the intermediaries that help us to direct our love to its right object, to God. The first

5. Ps 120.1–2.

6. See, e.g., *Tractates* 2.3, 23.3, and 54.4. For an excellent analysis of this metaphor of the lamp, see R. Hardy, *Actualité de la révélation divine*, *Theologie Historique* 28 (Paris, 1974) 168–175; and Poque, *Le langage*, 1.362–364. The whole image of light, especially as it refers to God and Christ, occurs frequently in these *Tractates*. A lengthy discussion of this imagery is found in Poque, *Le langage*, 1.344–375.

7. On Augustine's theory of illumination see E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, tr. E. Lynch (New York, 1960), 77–96; and E. Portalié, *A Guide to the Thought of Saint Augustine*, tr. R. Bastian (Chicago, 1960), 213–223. For a different approach and a different analysis, see, B. Bubacz, *St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge: A Contemporary Analysis* (New York, 1981), 8–38, 133–61; and R. Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Lexington, 1969). A good brief account is found in E. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian* (New York, 1970), 103–7.

8. The concept of the interior master is frequently alluded to in the *Tractates*; see, e.g., *Tractates* 1.7, 3.15, 16.3, 18.10, 20.3, 22.1, 26.7, 54.8, 57.3, and 96.4. On the interior master in Augustine's thought see Gilson, 66–76; on the concept in the *Tractates* see Hardy, 138–144.

and essential intermediary is Christ himself, the mediator between man and God, especially Christ as man since the metaphysical gap between human nature and divine nature is an abyss that man cannot cross on his own. But also, in the physical absence of the historical Jesus, the Prophets, the apostles, Scripture, and each and every Christian who has the light, all these are lamps, that is, intermediaries. So Augustine, too, is a lamp, shining forth the light of John's Gospel to stir love for the interior Word in the hearts of his congregated people.

(4) Seated upon his *cathedra* in his church at Hippo, with the Bible spread open upon a lectern at his side,<sup>9</sup> Augustine spoke vigorously, with the full dramatic force of ancient oratorical style, directly and immediately to the motley audience standing before him. These volatile and fiery Africans<sup>10</sup> responded to the bishop's words with enthusiastic shouts of approval, or with questions or tears or groans.<sup>11</sup> The sermon was a lively exchange between the pastor and his people;<sup>12</sup> he was ever sensitive and responsive to their reactions and they were quickly influenced by his preaching. Sensibility, impetuosity, a considerable knowledge of doctrine that enabled them to follow complex theological argumentation, and a desire for a firm and unshakeable faith, marked these crowds of people.

9. The scene is taken, with a bit of license, from a fresco in the Lateran Library, an illustration printed in Van der Meer, opposite page 216. Adhering to the dignity accorded to the bishop, Augustine usually spoke seated. See, e.g., *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 13.19 (PL 40.325; and CCL 46.142-144); *Sermo* 17.2 (PL 38.125; and CCL 41.238), 95.2 (PL 38.581), and 355.2 (PL 39.1569; and SPM 1.125); M.-F. Berrouard, *Homélies sur l'évangile de saint Jean, I-XVI*, BA 71 (1969), 11; P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley, 1967), 251-252 and 259; and M. Pontet, *L'exégèse de s. Augustin prédicateur* (Paris, 1946), 37. Sometimes, however, he stood; see, e.g., *Tractate* 19.17. The audience always stood; see, e.g., *Tractate* 19.17. For a description of a typical Sunday liturgy at Hippo see, A.-G. Hamman, *La vie quotidienne en Afrique du Nord au temps de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1979), 221-244.

10. "Ces africaines mobiles et ardentes," Pontet, 91.

11. E.g., *Tractates* 3.21, 9.9, 19.20, and 35.9. See, *MDC* 4.24.53; Brown, *Augustine*, 250-251; Hamman, 235-239; Pontet, 41-43; and Van der Meer, 427-428.

12. In the *Tractates* there are numerous indications of audience involvement: questions, imperatives, short monologistic dialogues, the recalling of attention, mention of current events, frequent repetitions of scriptural passages, recalling of previous sermons, new explanations when the first is not

Together they searched and prayed<sup>13</sup> that the Word, the inner light, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, might lead Augustine to a clear, effective, and moving exegesis, and the people of God to an understanding of the meaning of Scripture that would so affect their souls as to help them grow spiritually, indeed, so as to bring them to eternal salvation.<sup>14</sup>

(5) Aristocrats and slaves, the rich and the poor, important state officials and ordinary people, educated and uneducated, some unable even to read,<sup>15</sup> the spiritually mature and the natural men,<sup>16</sup> husbands and wives, virgins and widows, the baptized and the catechumens, pagans, heretics, and Jews,<sup>17</sup> in a mixture of sexes, ages, temperaments, and beliefs, these, God's people, Augustine never failed to love and to serve. These he never failed to nourish with his sermons flowing from the eternally fresh spring of God's word; and he never failed to address them, however weary he was, however weak his voice might be.<sup>18</sup> His preaching was a debt incurred by his consecration to the episcopacy,<sup>19</sup> but it was a burden which

grasped, mention of audience reactions, leaving questions unresolved at the end of the sermon, and so on. See, DDC 4.10.25; Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 11–13; G. Finaert, *L'évolution littéraire de saint Augustin*, *Collection d'études latines* 17 (Paris, 1939), 154–158; and Hamman, 235.

13. E.g., *Tractates* 4.16, 5.20, 17.1, and 20.3. See also DDC 4.15.32 and 29.62. On the charismatic character of Augustine's preaching see, C. Mohrmann, "Saint Augustin prédicateur," *La Maison-Dieu* 39 (1954) 83–96, reprinted in *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, 1 (Rome, 1961), 391–402.

14. See DDC 4.30.63. Augustine sees man as capable of spiritual growth and such growth becomes one of man's primary goals and responsibilities; yet, this growth in spiritual life is rooted in man's earthly, corporeal existence and cannot occur unless that reality is attended to. See, e.g., *Tractates* 1.1, 4, and 18, 2.2, 7.23, 18.7, 19.11, 38.10, 102.4; and Hardy, 85–87.

15. "By speaking let us bring it about that [the understanding of the name Israel] not slip away even for those who have not learned or were unwilling to read. Let us be their book." *En in Ps* 121.8 (CCL 40.1808). See also, Hamman, 203.

16. See *Tractate* 1.1 and 4.

17. Canon 84 of the Fourth Council of Carthage, held on November 8, 398, states "that the bishop prevent no one from entering the church and hearing the word of God, whether pagan, or heretic, or Jew, up through the mass of the catechumens." *Concilia Africae A. 345–A. 525* (CCL 149.351). See also Hamman, 197–200.

18. See Pontet, 46; and Van der Meer, 413.

19. See Pontet, 36–37.

ran counter to his Neo-Platonic contemplative inclinations, and which weighed heavily upon him, and required great effort on his part.<sup>20</sup>

### Literary Style of the *Tractates*

(6) The 124 *Tractates on the Gospel of John* exemplify Augustine's theory of preaching which is presented in the treatise *De Doctrina Christiana* (*On Christian Instruction*). The ornate, erudite, and affected style of the Second Sophistic which controlled the oratory of his times was rejected by Augustine as inappropriate for Christian preaching; yet he did not altogether discard the classical theory which was studied, particularly in the rhetorical writings of Cicero and Quintilian. That theory could provide a suitable framework for a Christian oratorical style, but there were certain conditions faced by the Christian preacher that compelled modification of the theory. For the Christian, content was of overriding importance:<sup>21</sup> what was said was more significant than such things as choice of vocabulary or sentence structure or elaborate phraseology. Content had to be clear and understandable if the sermon was to teach, to exhort, or to persuade. Augustine did not reject the classical figures of speech; indeed he showed that Scripture and the earlier Fathers made use of such figures as effectively as the great Latin orators.<sup>22</sup> Yet he used primarily those figures which produced clarity and which were popular with his largely uneducated audiences:<sup>23</sup> paratactic parallelisms, antitheses, climaxes, pithy alternations of questions

20. See Brown, *Augustine*, 256.

21. *DDC* 4.24-53. The various statements made here about Augustine's theory of Christian oratory are supported by a detailed study made in the doctoral dissertation of G. Doyle, "St. Augustine's *Tractates on the Gospel of John* Compared with the Rhetorical Theory of the *De Doctrina Christiana*," Ph.D. diss., (University of North Carolina, 1975). Cf., *Dissertation Abstracts International* 37:3 (1976) 1525-A.

22. *DDC* 4, *passim*.

23. For a good, brief account see Hamman, 231-234; C. Mohrmann, "Saint Augustine and the 'Eloquentia,'" *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, 1 (Rome, 1961), 351-370; and Van der Meer, 417-432.

and answers in a quasi-dialogue form, occasional rhymes, and a multitude of word plays which are difficult to translate. He also used the nonliterary word where it would communicate more effectively to the unlettered in his audience. Repetition, particularly of Scripture, is especially noticeable in these *Tractates*. The result of this compromise with classicism was not a debased, vulgar plebian style; rather, Augustine created a new homiletic style of high aesthetic impact.<sup>24</sup> The translator is not altogether confident that his translation even adequately captures the alluring beauty of Augustinian Latinity.<sup>25</sup>

(7) There was, however, no compromise in the content, only in the style. Augustine discussed in his *Tractates* the theological problems with which he was currently concerned. He was a humble Christian, no savant overly proud of his genius and accomplishments (although one should not think from this that he did not stand up vigorously to those who opposed him, or that he did not take an aggressive and determined stand for what he was convinced was true and right). He did not consider his theology too difficult or too abstruse for the simple folk; they received the fullness of his theological knowledge and spiritual experience, whatever the style of his sermon might be. It would seem that these people of God, in spite of their lack of education, were so well informed, natively intelligent, and deeply interested in doctrinal questions that they grasped fairly well what he preached.<sup>26</sup>

24. See Brown, *Augustine*, 256, on how the fusion of many elements with a modified classicism produced this new life for Christian oratorical style.

25. "Many . . . find it impossible to read these *Tractates* in the original, but if they are obliged to make use of a translation, they lose much of the beauty and force of the original. For Augustine's power and charm lie very often in the exquisite Latin he employs," E. Pope, "Saint Augustine's *Tractatus in Iohannem*: A Neglected Classic," *The Ecclesiastical Review* 49 (1913) 169.

26. See Mohrmann, "Saint Augustin prédicateur," 96; and Van der Meer, 432-438. One clearly gets this impression from reading these sermons. But Brown, *Augustine*, 248-249, points out that there existed in the Christian world of this time a split between "an ascetic elite," who sought "the perfect life," and a somewhat demoralized "passive rank and file" who knew that they could not attain this perfection. Augustine, in striving for perfection and belonging to the "elite," may have expected of his people, even though he worked for them with deep love and heroic devotion, more than they were capable of.

(8) Three other factors affected the style of the *Tractates*. First, they were delivered extemporaneously and taken down in writing by shorthand experts as they were being delivered.<sup>27</sup> This extemporaneity explains the occasional irrelevancies and ramblings, the spots of obscurity, the repetition, the structure of the content, and the numerous remarks addressed to audience reaction.<sup>28</sup> Second, the centrality of Scripture in Christian preaching, as well as Christian life, necessarily influenced the style of all Christian writers, even those who were basically classical in their oratorical theory. Finally there was a heavy dependence upon prayer and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the planning that preceded the sermon.<sup>29</sup> It was not that Augustine did not recommend study or thought planning unimportant, if there was time for it; rather, he assumed that such profound truth was not within the power of fallen man's intellect, and that without divine help not even the greatest intelligence could properly comprehend the meanings of Scripture. He constantly begs his audience to pray for him that he, and they through him, might gain understanding.

(9) Augustine accepted Cicero's three goals for oratory, to teach, to please, and to persuade.<sup>30</sup> For the Christian preacher teaching was an eminent necessity. Pleasing, both through exhortation and rebuke (for condemnation is as satisfying to the serious soul as praise), was valuable, not for the pleasure in

27. R. Deferrari, "St. Augustine's Method of Composing and Delivering Sermons," *American Journal of Philology* 43 (1922) 97-123, 193-219, and "Verbatim Reports of Augustine's Unwritten Sermons," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 46 (1915) 35-45. These two articles are still the basic studies on this subject. See also *En in Ps* 51.1 (CCL 39.623); Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 9; and Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, ed. M. Pellegrino, *Verba Seniorum* 4 (1955) 60-62. H. -I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, tr. G. Lamb (New York, 1956), 312-313, has a good account of the prevalence, importance, and teaching of shorthand in the late Roman Empire.

28. "... the average sermon of Augustine makes such a disorderly impression that his unpretentious manner seems almost to suggest carelessness," Van der Meer, 418. Yet the artlessness is deceptive; it is intentional and part of the style and in no way detracts from its beauty, as the careful reader of the Latin text will observe.

29. DDC 4.15.32 and 16.33. See note 13.

30. DDC 4.12.27.

itself, but as a means to promote understanding and effect action in the life of the listener. Persuading was, of course, vitally important; if the soul did not respond to the knowledge it acquired, with God's grace aiding it, it could not achieve salvation and the *Tractates* would have been futile. Cicero's three styles also admirably suited the three goals;<sup>31</sup> the subdued style for teaching intelligently,<sup>32</sup> the moderate style to give aesthetic pleasure, and the grand style to stir passionate feelings of the heart and to persuade the listeners to be converted to the truth.<sup>33</sup> Since all three purposes existed in any one *Tractate*, a blending of the styles was desirable,<sup>34</sup> and the good preacher was able to shift as the needs of his speech required.

### Allegorical Exegesis

(10) Augustine's primary approach to exegesis, certainly for the Gospel of John, was allegorical, or perhaps better, symbolical or spiritual. He did not deny the validity of other methods of interpretation nor hesitate to apply them so that a particular text might be explained literally or historically, etiologically or by analogy, as well as symbolically. Scripture is of unfathomable depth and carries many meanings all at once. To interpret a passage symbolically is not to deny its literal or historical truth, but to see that fact as a sign representing a deeper inner spiritual truth or truths. So, for example, there were six jars of water at Cana<sup>35</sup> which in historical fact were changed into six jars of wine; the miracle did occur and does attest Christ's divinity. But that miracle is also a sign of

31. DDC 4.17.34 and 18.35.

32. This was the style Augustine thought best suited for his day-to-day work. See DDC 4.18.36 and Brown, *Augustine*, 255.

33. Augustine's commitment to seeking perfection often affected his style. This is reflected even in the treatises. Brown, *Augustine*, 248–249, describes his defense of married life in the *De Bono Coniugali* as "conscientious," whereas the *De Sancta Virginitate* is "lyrical," and the defense of nuns raped in the sack of Rome in the *De Civitate Dei* 2.2.88 shows traces of "outraged gallantry."

34. DDC 4.22.51.

35. See *Tractate* 8.1 and 9, *passim*. Cf. *Tractate* 24.2.

spiritual realities and these may be more important in our lives than the fact of the miracle.<sup>36</sup> These spiritual realities were what Augustine sought to explicate.

(11) The emphasis on hidden meanings was inevitable in Augustine for two reasons, one secular and one Christian. Augustine was educated in the literary culture of upper class late Roman society. This literary culture was stirred in his times by a vigorous revival of the high literary standards of the classical tradition, and, at the same time, it was narrowed by its emphasis on hidden meanings, rare and difficult vocabulary, and elaborate style. The allegorical method itself was confined to the study of strictly religious texts and was used therein by pagans, Hebrews, and Christians. But the search for deeper and less obvious meanings was part of the literary tradition of late Roman culture.<sup>37</sup> In addition, at least for Augustine, symbolical interpretation was inescapable because of the fallen condition of man's soul. The human intellect is incapable of knowing God directly except for occasional flashes of awareness. The fallen intellect works indirectly through signs.<sup>38</sup> The Bible alone provides the bridge between this dislocated human consciousness and direct awareness. Symbolical exegesis is the methodology that enables interpretation of the signs.<sup>39</sup> In John's Gospel, even more than the

36. See, e.g., *Tractate* 49.2 where the three resurrections that are read about in the New Testament symbolize the return of the sinner to spiritual life, that is, the re-entry of divine strength into the soul. See also Pontet, 567-568; Van der Meer, 438-439; and for a good, basic discussion of this whole topic, H. -I Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris, 1938), 478-494, 646-651.

37. See Brown, *Augustine*, 259-261, and *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), 115-118; Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 494-498.

38. See, e.g., *DDC* 1.2.2., 2.1. to 3.4 and 7.10 and 11; *Tractates* 15.1, 24.6, and 26.12. On Augustine's theory of signs, both in general and in its application to scriptural exegesis see, R. Ayers, *Language, Logic, and Reason in the Church Fathers* (Hildesheim, 1979), 67-78, and his "Language Theory and Analysis in Augustine," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 29 (1976) 1-12; B. Jackson, "The Theory of Signs in St. Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*," *REAug* 15 (1969) 9-49; R. Markus, "St. Augustine on Signs," *Phronesis* 2 (1957) 60-83; and Van der Meer, 298-311.

39. See Brown, *Augustine*, 261-263, and, e.g., *Tractates* 7.21, 9.3, 10.12, 15.18-21, 17.4, and 24.6.

rest of Scripture, the literal and historical realities of Christ's life represent spiritual reality. Each specific historical act is significant of an interior, hidden, more real action; each specific historical act reveals a universalization pertinent to the inner spiritual life of the human soul. *Factum audivimus, mysterium requiramus*: "we have heard what happened, let us search out the hidden meaning."<sup>40</sup>

(12) It is not by the exercise of reason alone that we understand divine revelation. For it is faith that is the essential and unavoidable first step in the process of salvation, a gift of grace by which God presents man with an obscure vision of himself. The effort of trying to understand the vision of faith in order to see God clearly is a preparation in this transitory life of exile for the eternal contemplation of the divine reality in the true life.<sup>41</sup> Love is also an absolute necessity for the divine revelation to achieve God's plan for human salvation. Augustine preached to his people out of his love for them and he preached love.<sup>42</sup> Now love is an act of will, as faith is an act of reason. Man cannot know God on his own by the exercise of his natural powers because his will is disordered, his love is disordered. He loves the wrong things and so makes the wrong choices. He sins. And sin plunges him into intellectual darkness. But man's will is free; he freely loves, and freely chooses and freely sins. Out of love God gives man his revelation, a free gift of grace. The revealed knowledge of God re-directs our love; we love what we know.<sup>43</sup> Faith draws the will<sup>44</sup> to love what is the proper object of love. Out of faith man freely chooses to love God and seeks to know him whom he

40. *Tractate* 50.6.

41. See Hardy, 66–73, and Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin*, 485–488.

42. "... l'amour. C'est un principe cher à saint Augustin," Hardy, 90. See also *Tractates* 3.21, 6.1, 7.1, 9.8, 17.6 and 9, 27.5, 32.8–9, 76.2, 83.2–3, 96.4, and 123.5; and Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 13–14, 16–17, 23–24, and 52–53. The most common forms of address in the *Tractates* are *caritas vestra* and *carissimi*, e.g., *Tractate* 1.1 and 2.

43. "'Revelatio' signifie une action dynamique de Dieu en l'homme pour lui faire voir dans un amour engageant les réalités divines," Hardy, 58.

44. Cf. *Tractate* 26.25: *Ista revelatio, ipsa est adtractio*, "This revelation is itself the drawing (of the Father)."

loves.<sup>45</sup> Faith reorients the soul to God, but it reorients the soul through the mediator, Christ, who heals it of its sin. Faith, love, grace, and understanding are concepts repeatedly emphasized all through these *Tractates*.

## Jesus Christ, the Mediator

(13) The Prophets, the apostles, Scriptures, preachers, bishops, and our fellow Christians, are all intermediaries that assist God in helping us bridge that metaphysical abyss that separates our nature from his nature. But the mediator is Jesus Christ. God's revelation is given us through his Word, the Logos, the second person of the 'Trinity'; and the Word of God is the historical Jesus Christ. John's Gospel<sup>46</sup> particularly emphasized the divinity of Jesus, the identity of the historical Jesus with the Messianic Christ with the 'Trinitarian Word'. These *Tractates* then are necessarily involved with much Trinitarian and Christological theology. Augustine's teachings explain and defend the orthodox position established at the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.) and the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.), although from the posture of the Western mind, and conditioned by the Latin language.

(14) Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man, is the major theme that runs through all these *Tractates*.<sup>47</sup> Christ is the center of the Christian life. He is the way and the destination; he is the truth and the light; he is the true life who by his death as a man has triumphed over that death which is the temporal life that he shared with us. He is the Word of God who made us, who as our interior teacher gives us the inner illumination to see, to know, and to love the Father, who sends

45. See Hardy, 83–109, for a detailed discussion of the matters presented here.

46. Augustine accepts the Gospel, the three Epistles, and the Apocalypse all as the writings of the Apostle John. See *DDC* 2.8.13. In the *De Haeresibus* 30 (CCL 46.304) he mentions certain heretics whom he calls the *Alogi* who deny that the Gospel and the Apocalypse were written by John. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 55–57.

47. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 64–77.

us the Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide us. He is the historical Jesus who brought us revelation, salvation, spiritual reformation, and love. The Incarnation of the Word is the basis of the genuine Christian life; Word and man, two natures, one person, the head who joins his members to himself and to his Father as adopted children, the bridegroom who through his bride, the Church, provides the sacramental means and the unity whereby he shepherds his flock. He is God omnipotent who through love for us became man, an act of humility presented to us again and again as a model for our imitation as disciples of Jesus. He must ever be the focus of life and Augustine never allowed those people of God who are his episcopal responsibility to lose this vision.

### Christological and Trinitarian Heresies

(15) But it was not only John's Gospel that demanded this theological attention; Arianism and other Christological heresies, and the now longstanding turmoil which they provoked in the Church, indeed in the Roman world, called Augustine to give deep thought to these questions. His pastoral orientation, probably even more than his theological interests,<sup>48</sup> caused him, in fact, to be exceedingly anxious about heresies, particularly those to which his congregation was exposed and by which its faith was endangered. Heresy was always a major motivation leading the Fathers to ponder and develop the teachings of the Christian church.<sup>49</sup> These sermons clearly illustrate that process of development and that motivation at work in Augustine's thought.

(16) Manichaeism was not strictly a Christian heresy but another religion; yet its North African variant, showing the typical Manichaean syncretism, especially assimilated certain Christian ideas and can be called the most "Christian"

48. "Augustin *polémiste* est inséparable d'Augustin *pasteur*," A. Mandouze, *Saint Augustin: L'aventure de la raison et de la grâce* (Paris, 1968), 333.

49. See M. Wiles, *The Making of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 1967), 18–19, 28–35.

Manichaeism in the ancient world.<sup>50</sup> Augustine himself, as is well known, was for nine years a Manichee; as everything that Augustine did had a profound effect upon his intellectual development, this period of his life is obviously very important for understanding the growth of his theological thought. Many of Augustine's writings are directed against the Manichaean teachings and against Manichaeans such as the renowned Manichaean theologian, Faustus, and the priest, Fortunatus, who, after his debate with Augustine, is said to have left Carthage and never returned. Some of Augustine's views developed out of his reflections upon and debates with Manichaean doctrine, as, for example, the wrongness of the dualistic world view, the perfection and incorruptibility of God, the necessity that God be the sole creator of the world, the nature of evil as the privation of good, and sin as the act of weak but free wills.<sup>51</sup>

(17) As one reads these *Tractates*, however, the impression is left that Manichaeism was not a very grave danger among Augustine's congregation; it was, nonetheless, quite persistent in its missionary zeal and Augustine does refer to it on occasion in these sermons. Although Manichaean ideas lay in the background of some of his discussions, in direct confrontation with it here, his chief aim is to expose the absurdity of its Christian elements, such as identifying Jesus with the sun,<sup>52</sup>

50. See F. Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees* (Cambridge, 1935), 42–43, 66–67, and G. Widengren, *Mani and Manichaeism*, tr. C. Kessler (London, 1965), 72–73, 122–123, although L. Koenen, "Augustine and Manichaeism in light of the Cologne Mani Codex," *Illinois Classical Studies* 3 (1978) 154–195, shows that there was a considerable Christian element in Manichaeism from its beginnings.

51. A good brief summary of Augustine and Manichaeism is provided by S. Hopper, "The Anti-Manichaean Writings," in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. R. Battenhouse (New York, 1955), 148–178. Augustine's intellectual development was a complex and prolonged process and one must be cautious of overly simple summaries. He was widely read in ancient philosophy as it was available to an educated man of the Latin West; so, for example, Neo-Platonism heavily influenced his critique of Manichaeism, and while it led him toward his later Christian positions, it also put his thought into a cast that must be considered carefully for an exact understanding and presentation of his views, as his rejection of Manichaean dualism did not remove from his thought a Neo-Platonic dualism.

52. See *Tractate* 34.2.

and to caution his people against the enticements of its dualistic logic.<sup>53</sup>

(18) Donatism was a solely North African schismatic movement with heretical tendencies. For Augustine it was the most virulent enemy. Originating in the dispute over lapsed Christians that arose during the Decian persecution and assimilating to itself elements of social and political unrest, Donatism had a profound appeal, particularly in the rural areas, to the North African temperament,<sup>54</sup> that caused it to become the most serious threat to Catholic Christianity in Africa before the coming of Islam. It was a schismatic, puritanical, and sacramental movement.<sup>55</sup>

(19) The Donatists maintained that they were, in fact, the true Christian church and that the Catholic church was a deviant church, created by the Church of Rome in cooperation with the secular society of the Roman Empire.<sup>56</sup> Their view stemmed from a notion of the Church that had always been strong among African Christians, that the Church was alien to the world which was viewed as something hostile to the people of God and impure. Against this Augustine argued for the universal character of Christianity; he rejected the notion that the Church was an isolated, anti-social society of a pure elite in favor of the concept of a Christian church intermingled with the secular societies of this world. His concept of separation was eschatological; the goats would be separated from the sheep, the tares from the wheat, only at the end. Communion with the universal, apostolic Church was for him the mark of genuineness, the true Catholic church. *Ecclesia catholica, mater Christianorum verissima*: "The Catholic church, the

53. See, e.g., *Tractates* 1.14 and 16.8.5, and 9.2.

54. See J. Ferguson, "Aspects of Early Christianity in North Africa," *Africa in Classical Antiquity* (Ibadan, 1969), 189–190.

55. This terminology is taken from J. Keleher, *Saint Augustine's Notion of Schism in the Donatist Controversy* (Mundelein, 1961).

56. This is a complex topic with an extensive bibliography and a variety of viewpoints. See especially, P. Batiffol, *Le catholicisme de saint Augustin*, 3d ed. (Paris, 1920), 118–276; Brown, *Augustine*, 212–215; S. Grabowski, *The Church. An Introduction to the Theology of St. Augustine* (St. Louis, 1957), 53–55, 198–227; and R. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge, 1970), 105–132.

most true mother of Christians."<sup>57</sup> This Church existed, then, before the Donatist church and, in spite of the fact that Donatists were a considerable majority in Hippo when he became bishop there, it was the Donatists who were schismatic and deviant. To re-establish unity in the African church was one of Augustine's driving motivations, particularly in the earlier part of his episcopacy.

(20) Not only Augustine's intense desire for unity but also the fierce aggressiveness of many Donatists and their insistence that theirs was the true Catholic church provoked Augustine into a strong resistance to this schism which he believed had become a heresy because of its persistent opposition to reunion.<sup>58</sup> At first he sought to reconcile the Donatists through Christian love and patient argument. While he was not adamantly opposed to the exercise of force to compel conversion, he was reluctant to see it used, and generally resisted such proposals by his fellow bishops. He had been distressed by the insincere conversions of pagans who had been forced by the Christian government to enter the Christian church and he accepted the long-held conviction of ancient Christians, a conviction especially strong in North Africa, that conversion must be a totally free choice. At first this reluctance was somewhat softened when he saw that those in his congregation who had been Donatists and had been compelled to become Catho-

57. *De Moribus Catholicae Ecclesiae et de Moribus Monachorum* 1.30.62 (PL 32.1336). See also, Brown, *Augustine*, 225.

58. The *locus classicus* for Augustine's later views on religious coercion is *Epistula* 93 (PL 33.321-347; and FOTC 18.56-106). My presentation relies heavily, but not exclusively, on Brown, *Augustine*, 226-243, and his two excellent essays, "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion," and "Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa," in *Religion and Society in the Age of Augustine* (London, 1972), 260-278, 301-331. For a brief account of the several ramifications of this topic and for an extensive bibliography of both primary and secondary sources see E. Lamiand, *Church, State, and Toleration: An Intriguing Change of Mind in Augustine* (Villanova, Pa., 1975). J. P. Burns, "Augustine's Role in the Imperial Action against the Pelagians," *JThS* n. s. 30 (1979) 67-83, discusses what part Augustine may have played with the other African bishops in provoking and supporting governmental moves against the Pelagians, thus providing additional evidence of his later views. For a very unsympathetic view see R. West, *St. Augustine* (New York, 1933), 130-150.

lics had easily, readily, and sincerely converted. Then, as he continually faced what he saw as stubbornness and intractability on the part of the Donatists, and their use of violence, he was reluctantly convinced that a forced reunion was justifiable; and so he invited and cooperated with the regulation and prohibition of Donatism by the Roman government. He found this view justified both scripturally and theologically.

(21) Among the Hebrews of the Old Testament, because of their relatively low level of moral development, God had used the constraints of fear to promote unity; although earlier in his life he had optimistically believed that in the Christian era moral life was progressing to an ever higher level, the realities of his pastoral work led him to conclude that most men were still at the moral stage of the Old Testament Hebrews, hence fear could be put to use as a divinely sanctioned means of promoting goodness. Then, too, Jesus himself in the parable of the wedding feast had said, *Quoscumque inveneritis cogite intrare*: "Whomever you shall find, compel them to enter."<sup>59</sup> Moreover it is quite clear that God, at work among men, uses external pressure to effect the soul's inner moral and spiritual growth. So as God used this "disciplina," and could effect growth through "correctio" and "per molestias eruditio," in Augustine's own terminology, the Christian church and its ministers could aid in the process by the same means.

(22) Also he had by now developed his theory of the Roman state's role in the divine plan for the world's salvation, and of its function in promoting the welfare of the Church. Although he never felt comfortable with the infliction of severe physical punishment or the death penalty,<sup>60</sup> there was clearly a shift in his views about how to deal with heresy. He no longer considered it a wholly internal ecclesiastical problem but one involving the intervention of the state in the affairs of the Church.

59. Cf. Lk 14.23 as quoted in *Epistula* 93.2.4. (PL 33.323; CSEL 34(1).449; and FOTC 18.61).

60. Augustine, quite properly, felt that such actions would justify the claim of persecution made by the Donatists against the Catholics and persecution was clearly counterindicted by the historical experience of the Christian church.

(23) The dogmatic and almost fanatical insistence by Donatists that holiness was a requisite mark of the individual Christian character and that the true Church was a Church of saints, led to an extensive development in Augustine's thought concerning the mixed or progressive character of the living Church, a concept most congenial to his Neo-Platonic predilection.<sup>61</sup> This appears in both formal writings and sermons. The Church is a body composed of the holy and the sinful, both the wheat and the tares, and only in the end are the final results determinable; the Church struggles with the impurities within it as a part of its mission, as a characteristic of its very nature. The objective holiness which is a mark of the one, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic church is a growth of the mixed congregation toward the perfection of holiness, not an absolute condition requisite for membership in the Church.

(24) From this insistence on holiness as an essential requirement for the individual Christian, the Donatists argued that the validity of the sacraments, baptism in particular, was dependent upon the holiness of the minister. Augustine responded that the minister is only the vehicle through whom Christ confers the sacrament and that, desirable as holiness in the minister is, it is no requirement for the validity of the sacrament, since Christ, not the minister, confers and Christ, not the minister, baptizes. So when a Donatist joins the Catholic church he need not be rebaptized. It is true, however, that the Catholic church has been given special graces that enable the valid sacraments to become effective; that is, outside the Catholic church the sacrament is valid but inefficacious.

(25) Pelagianism came late into Augustine's life and challenged some ideas he had thought well-founded. Pelagius himself came briefly to Africa along with the flood of refugees who fled Rome in 410 after it was sacked by Alaric and the Visigoths who subsequently invaded southern Italy. The theological ideas of Pelagius were spread in Africa primarily through his radical disciple, Caelestius.<sup>62</sup> These ideas

61. See Brown, *Augustine*, 221-22.

62. See Brown, *Augustine*, 340-375; and Batiffol, 349-472. On Pelagius and his teachings see G. de Plinval, *Pelage. Ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme*.

had a particular appeal to the Roman upper classes who were undergoing a "crisis of piety"<sup>63</sup> and who found the perfectionism of Pelagius attractive. Augustine came to be gradually more and more involved with this heresy until about 418 he was the leading defender of the established teachings, the *fundatissima fides*.<sup>64</sup> Against Manichaean determinism he had established firm tenets about the nature of evil, man's freedom of will, and the entire relationship between man and God; now he had to re-examine and further refine his thought.

(26) Augustine did not doubt the existence of the will and that very existence reasonably demanded that the will be free to choose. Pelagius held that Adam's sin was a strictly personal sin; Augustine, building an explicit theory of original sin upon Paul and various earlier Fathers, held that this sin was a universal sin, a defect of the human soul, passed on by the head of the human family to his descendents. As evil is deficiency or privation, so this original sin is a deficiency or defect in man's spiritual nature. Consequently, since Adam's original sin, the human race has suffered from serious imperfection; a dislocation of human consciousness,<sup>65</sup> a deficiency and lack of order,<sup>66</sup> and a disordered love,<sup>67</sup> have rendered the person incapable of carrying to fulfillment even the good which he wills.

(27) Since God is totally self-sufficient, even man's being and his very will itself are a grace, a free, unmerited gift of God; man's perfection before the Fall was such a grace. In this sense man can do nothing without grace; in this sense even his free will is conditioned by grace. Yet with this kind of grace man still has the free will to choose good or evil, love of God or hatred; this freedom of will is a gift of grace. Since the Fall, however, the disorder that afflicts man renders his free choice

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(Lausanne, 1943); and J. Ferguson, *Pelagius. A Historical and Theological Study* (Cambridge, 1956).

63. Brown, *Augustine*, 348.

64. See *Epistula* 166.8.25 (PL 33:731; and CSEL 44:580); and Brown, *Augustine*, 354.

65. Brown, *Augustine*, 261.

66. See Gilson, 148.

67. See Hardy, 93-109.

of good or his love of the good impossible of realization unless he is further aided by other graces given by God through the Savior, Jesus Christ. God seeks to restore man to his original condition, and he does this through grace which aids the free will in effecting its choices. And so this second kind of grace is as essential for man's salvation as the other kind is for his very existence. So man retains freedom of will, yet requires grace to reach perfection.<sup>68</sup>

(28) In addition to the doctrines of original sin, grace, and free will, Augustine gave much thought to the complex and intricate concept of predestination.<sup>69</sup> Because he does not present us with a detailed, coherently expounded explication of his theory of predestination and because, therefore, the disparate elements found in various writings and sermons are difficult to combine into a logical exposition of this theory, there is much and sharp disagreement on how to explain what Augustine meant. Here are presented only certain elements in his theory for whatever elucidation of the *Tractates* they will provide.

(29) Pelagius, in asserting that freedom of will enables a man by his own efforts to achieve perfection, considered the concept of grace as being totally deterministic. It rendered an active life of struggle for perfection meaningless, in that grace meant that God predetermined who would or would not be saved, and this made free will pointless. Augustine sought to defend the active life of constantly striving by free moral choices toward holiness and perfection, the necessity of grace to achieve this, and at the same time God's foreknowledge and foreordination of election and damnation. Grace is an aid

68. This is perhaps a too simple presentation of complex ideas. For a fuller, yet brief, treatment see E. Gilson, 143–164; P. Lehman, "The Anti-Pelagian Writings," *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. R. Battenhouse (New York, 1955), 203–234; and Portalié, 177–213. A very thorough examination of Augustine's positions on the nature of evil, both in itself and as it relates to the question of free will and grace, both in response to the Manichaeans and to the Pelagians, is found in G. Evans, *Augustine on Evil* (Cambridge, 1982).

69. See Brown, *Augustine*, 398–407; Grabowski, 605–649; J. O'Donnell, *Augustine* (Boston, 1985), 74–79; Portalié, 213–223; and TeSelle, 319–332.

which assists the free will in exercising choice; it is necessary for man because of the disordered nature of his soul, but it is enabling, not compelling. God wills the salvation of all men; he wills to provide the enabling grace to whoever will make use of it. But God already knows who will choose good and who will choose evil.

(30) Among human beings knowing and willing are sequential and arise from separate functions of the rational soul; but in God knowing and willing are one and the same. In God to know is to will.<sup>70</sup> Consequently God, by knowing that some will be elected and some will be damned, wills that some be elected and some be damned, and he prepares graces for the elect to enable them to achieve their election; he predestines them. Nonetheless this predestination occurs in the context of the particular creation he has made; and he made a world of men who exercise free choice. That he already knows how they will choose does not remove their freedom of choice because they do not know and must strive by the means he freely gives them, his Son, Jesus Christ, the Church, and grace, to achieve the perfection that leads them to the prepared reward, salvation. Why he wanted this kind of world and why he allows some to be damned lies in the unfathomable depths of God's transcendent and infinite being.

(31) Augustine's treatment of Arianism and other Trinitarian heresies is primarily his own explanation of the Western orthodox theology of the Trinity. While composing his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, he wrote a special treatise, the *De Trinitate*, devoted to this important mystery. But Arianism and the other heresies seem to have had little real impact on his congregation, though the coming of the Arian Goths around 417 represented a potential threat to his people. Their increased numbers and increased activity drew his more ardent attention at a later date.<sup>71</sup> But his treatment in these *Tractates* shows more of the schoolroom than of the passion with which he assails Manichees, Donatists, and Pelagians.

70. Cf. *Tractates* 18.9, 20.8, 21.2-5 and 10, 23.11, 38.10, 40.5, 99.4.

71. See e.g., *Tractate* 40.7; A. -M. La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie augustinienne* (Paris, 1965), 94-99; Van der Meer, 119-123.

(32) The richness in doctrinal content for these *Tractates* should be quite clear from the foregoing. For his pastoral purposes Augustine combined scriptural exegesis, the refutation of false teachings, and theological reflections with the spiritual and moral instruction of his people. Moreover his teachings herein come from his mature years and hence represent his mature thought on these many topics, as will be seen from the dating of the sermons. A thoroughgoing account of this vast content, even in summary form, is beyond the scope of this Introduction.

### The Dates of the *Tractates*

(33) Much effort has been expended in attempting to date these *Tractates*. In the famous Maurist Benedictine edition of the works of Augustine, the editors dated both the 124 *Tractates on the Gospel of John* and the 10 *Tractates on the First Epistle of John* in or shortly after 416, although they considered it possible that the series of sermons could have been initiated at an earlier time.<sup>72</sup> They viewed the *Tractates* as a single, complete series; it seems not to have occurred to them that they might fall into groups delivered at different times. Later scholars either confirmed the Maurist date, adding additional argumentation,<sup>73</sup> or slightly modified it.<sup>74</sup> In the

72. See PL. 35.1375–1378. Migne's text is basically a reprinting of the Maurist edition; for the *Tractates* he included the essay, *De Subsequentibus in Iohannem Tractatibus*, from that edition.

73. For example, Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique* 13 (Venice, 1732), 708, cited by S. Zarb, "Chronologia Tractatum S. Augustini in Evangelium primamque Epistulam Ioannis Apostoli," *Angelicum* 10 (1933) 52. He would prefer the year 412 because of the conflict with the Donatists and the appearance of Pelagianism in North Africa; but the reference to the discovery of the remains of St. Stephen in *Tractate* 120.4 could only be justified as a later addition by Augustine and this is unlikely, so he retains 416. M. Comeau, *Saint Augustin, exégète du quatrième évangile* (Paris, 1930), 2–5, adds the argument that *De Trinitate* 15.27.48 which she dates in 416 reproduces *Tractate* 99.8–9, and from internal evidence argues that the sermons were delivered between early January and December of 416.

74. R. Deferrari, "On the Date and Order of Delivery of St. Augustine's *Tractates* on the Gospel and Epistles of St. John," *Classical Philology* 12 (1917)

last half century several major works have appeared which, through new methodologies and a more detailed examination of the sermons in connection with the life and writings of Augustine, have proposed different and sounder dates. While one can quite profitably read these *Tractates* without attention to chronology, it is nonetheless important to date them as accurately as possible in order to appreciate the development of Augustine's theology. Therefore a brief survey of this work follows.

(34) The 124 *Tractates on the Gospel of John* fall into two obvious groups, 1 to 54 and 55 to 124, both in length and in character. The 10 *Tractates on the First Epistle*, according to Augustine,<sup>75</sup> intervened between *Tractates* 12 and 13, thus forming part of this first group. Furthermore, it is quite clear that this first group of 64 sermons were all actually delivered before Augustine's congregation in Hippo Regius. Scholars agree on these points; however, the dating of this group and the dating and exact character of the second group are disputed.

(35) Zarb<sup>76</sup> arrives at his dates from a careful study of the external and internal evidence. The only solid piece of external evidence is the fact that *De Trinitate* 15.27.48 quotes *Tractate* 99.8–9. Augustine's *Retractationes* do not mention these *Tractates*, and their occurrence on the list in Possidius' *Indiculus*<sup>77</sup> is uninformative. There are several kinds of internal evidence: time references in one sermon to another or to

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191–194, after arguing for the later date rather than an early one, deduces from the manner of referring to other sermons and from indications of the day on which a particular sermon was given that *Tractates* 1–53, with the 10 *Tractates on the First Epistle* given after *Tractate* 11, were delivered on, or nearly on, successive days, but that *Tractates* 54–124 probably were given only on Sundays and special feast days. The sermons were begun in a time of cold weather; so he holds that they were begun late in 416, continued through 417 and possibly into 418.

75. *Tr. in 1o Ep.* prologue. See P. Agaësse, *Saint Augustin Commentaire de la première épître de S. Jean*, SC 75 (Paris, 1961) 104–107.

76. S. Zarb, 50–110 (see note 73).

77. Possidius, *Indiculus*. See PL 46. 12 or A. Wilmart, "Operum S. Augustini Elenchus a Possidio Eiusdem Discipulo Calamensi Episcopo Digestus," *Miscellanea Agostiniana* II (Rome, 1931), 182.

events in the liturgical calendar;<sup>78</sup> references to known historical events;<sup>79</sup> allusions to contemporary heresies;<sup>80</sup> and the biblical texts used.<sup>81</sup> Zarb does divide the *Tractates* into the two groupings. The first group contains bitter attacks on the Donatists, all of its sermons are rather lengthy, and there are many chronological references; these homilies were actually delivered. In the second group, however, all the sermons are brief and there are no chronological references to prior sermons. Zarb maintains that, because of certain phrasings in them, these sermons were dictated for later reading to the people rather than extemporaneously delivered.

(36) From references to a *Pax Ecclesiae* and to the intervention of the Emperor against the Donatists, combined with vague allusions to Pelagianism, he suggests a date for the first group between 411, the year of the Conference at Carthage

78. For example, mention of the Lord's day or a phrase like *hesterno die* ("yesterday") or a sermon on a particular feast day, as that of St. Lawrence on August 10 (*Tractate* 27), or the date of Easter.

79. The obvious example of the finding of the relics of St. Stephen mentioned in *Tractate* 120.4.

80. The main battling against the Manichaeans took place before 398; in these sermons Manichaeism is referred to, but is not of any considerable importance. Against Donatism, from 392 to 404 Augustine tried gentle persuasion; from 404 to 411 comes the period of vigorous combat, and after 411 the heresy wanes. Pelagianism appeared in North Africa in 411 and Augustine at first attacked it obliquely and somewhat gently; but in 416 he openly assails and condemns the heresy.

81. In DDC 2.15.22 Augustine indicates that he prefers the *Itala* to other Latin translations, although both that text and its meaning are in doubt. Some see the term *Itala* as a code name for all pre-Vulgate Latin versions known collectively as the Old Latin, or as one branch of the Old Latin, the Italian rather than, e.g., the African, or as the north Italian variant adopted by Augustine under the influence of Ambrose, or Jerome's Vulgate itself; and some would emend the text or eliminate the term altogether. A good brief account is found in B. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament* (Oxford, 1977), 290–293. Metzger does not mention the work of C. Milne, *A Reconstruction of the Old Latin Text or Texts of the Gospels Used by Saint Augustine* (Cambridge, 1926), perhaps because he does not discuss the DDC reference to the *Itala* or because his book is simply an application of the well known work of F. C. Burkitt, *The Old Latin and the Itala* (Cambridge, 1896). Milne maintains that after the publication of Jerome's Vulgate in 383 Augustine adopted that version, but in the period 385–400, which Milne studies and which predates the *Tractates*, he frequently quoted from the African version, and he gives a book full of examples from the New Testament. He does suggest that there

that outlawed Donatism,<sup>82</sup> and 416 when Augustine's attack on Pelagianism became open and clearcut. The 10 *Tractates on the First Epistle* were delivered during an Easter season. *Tractate* 27 celebrates the feast of St. Lawrence which is August 10. By examining carefully the time references in the sermons to establish a sequence for these 64 sermons, by determining in what year Augustine would have been present in Hippo to deliver sermons in this sequence, and by calculating the date of Easter, Zarb concludes that the first group was delivered in 413. For the second group he assigns the year 418. The news of the discovery of the remains of Stephen's body, mentioned in *Tractate* 120.4, reached Augustine in August, 416, when Paulus Orosius visited Hippo; so this group must occur after that. He argues that a reference to *De Civitate* 12 in *De Trinitate* 13 puts the latter in 417, and so *De Trinitate* 15 and *Tractate* 99 would likely have been composed in 418. Further, Augustine was at the Council of Carthage from May to July in 418, and from then until October he was in Caesarea at the request of Pope Zosimus to reconcile the Donatists there. These sermons, 55 to 124, were his contact with his people during that time, that is, he dictated them to be read to his people back in Hippo. Hence the second group belongs to 418.

(37) Le Landais<sup>83</sup> argues from wording, character, structure, and tone that all the sermons, including the second group, were preached by Augustine himself to his congregation. He effectively demonstrates that *En in Ps* 119 to 133 form a unified group of sermons which were delivered in con-

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are texts which are neither African Old Latin nor Vulgate. Metzger agrees with J. Schildenberger, "Die Itala der hl. Augustinus," ed. B. Fischer and V. Fiola, *Colligere fragmenta. Festschrift Alban Dold* (Beuron, 1952), 84-102, that the *Itala* is the Northern Italian Old Latin version. It would seem most likely that Augustine quotes from at least two Old Latin versions and from the Vulgate; it should also be pointed out that when he quotes from memory, Augustine may on occasion create an *ad hoc* version of his own, especially if he has in mind the Greek text.

82. See W. Frend, *The Donatist Church* (Oxford, 1952), 275-289.

83. M. La Landais, "Deux années de prédication de saint Augustin: introduction à la lecture de l'*In Iohannem*," *Études augustiniennes* 28 (Paris, 1953) 7-95.

junction with *Tractates* 1 to 12;<sup>84</sup> he further shows that *En in Ps* 95 should chronologically follow *En in Ps* 131 and so also belongs to this group. The intercalation of these sermons then provides a means of dating the whole group. *En in Ps* 120 refers to St. Crispina whose feast is December 5. *En in Ps* 127 concerns a St. Felix; the feast of Felix of Nola occurred in the Carthaginian calendar on January 14, and this fits well with its sequence after *Tractates* 5 and 6 since these show evidence of being preached in early January. *Tractate* 12 is clearly given shortly before Easter. *Tractate* 6.25–26 discusses the possession of Donatist property by the Catholic church according to imperial law; Le Landais identifies this law with a rescript of the Emperor Honorius in June, 414. He then suggests that the sermons began in December, 414.

(38) After *Tractate* 12 he places the 10 *Tractates on the First Epistle*, then *Tractates* 13 to 27, the last on the feast of St. Lawrence, August 10. For *Tractates* 28 to 54 he finds few chronological indications. *Tractates* 55 to 124 form an obvious group; they are all fairly brief, the Donatist heresy no longer requires lengthy and urgent exegeses, and the less pressing Pelagian heresy allows a more leisurely development of ideas, although the subject matter requires greater attention and concentration by his hearers and this would explain the brevity. Because of the reference to St. Stephen *Tractate* 120 must be dated, as Zarb pointed out, at least in the summer of 416. Now St. Stephen is also named in *Tractate* 101.4, but with no mention of his relics. The remains of Nicodemus were also found with those of Stephen, and this is what prompted the mention of Stephen in *Tractate* 120. Nicodemus is met in *Tractates* 33, 109, and 111, again with no mention of this much bruited discovery. So *Tractates* 33, 101, 109, and 111 must precede the summer of 416. It then follows that this whole group of *Tractates* and *Enarrationes* were delivered between December, 414, and late summer, 416.

84. For example, *Tractate* 4.16 promises an explanation of the dove and John the Baptist. *En in Ps* 126.13 recalls that promise and *Tractates* 5 and 6 fulfill it. Then *En in Ps* 127.13 refers to a recent explanation of why the dove carries a branch with olives on it, an explanation given in *Tractate* 6.19–20. See Le Landais, 17–21.

(39) La Bonnardière,<sup>85</sup> in addition to the standard methods of dating, introduces a new and effective method, relating themes and particular scriptural quotations with their particular exegeses to other datable writings of St. Augustine. She divides the sermons into several groups. *Tractates* 1 to 12, which, like Le Landais, she combines with *En in Ps* 95 and 119 to 133, and the *10 Tractates on the First Epistle* into a group of 38 sermons; *Tractates* 13 to 16; *Tractates* 17 to 23; *Tractates* 24 to 54; and *Tractates* 55 to 124. She disagrees sharply with other scholars about the dates of these sermons.

(40) The first group of 38 sermons she places in the years 406–407. The law about Donatist property which Le Landais had identified with the rescript of Honorius in June, 414, is similar to one dated February, 405. Augustine refers to it in *Epistula* 93 which is probably from 408. Most of the persons named by Augustine in these sermons are mentioned by him elsewhere only in the anti-Donatist writings prior to 411. For example, Marculus and Donatus of Bagai in *Tractate* 11.15 occur also in the *Contra Litteras Petiliani* 2.20.46 and the *Contra Cresconium* 3.49.54, both written in 405–406.

(41) To Cyprian's arguments about rebaptism, alluded to in *Tractate* 5.16, Augustine responded with an exegesis of Phil 3.15 which is used twenty times in this way in works between 400 and 411. So certain themes that are prominent in these sermons, such as the theme of the dove, occur almost entirely in works from the period 400 to 411. Other important considerations require a date earlier than June 411. There is not a single mention of the Conference of Carthage held in that month; the Donatists still have freedom of worship which that conference denied them. Moreover, on June 8, 411, Augustine held a debate with the Donatist Emeritus of Caesarea on the meaning of the Latin word *mundus*; there is not a sign of the arguments employed there in these sermons. Likewise, she asserts, there are no references to Pelagianism. Considerable evidence of this kind narrows the date to 406–408. *Tractate* 7 refers to a "feast of blood"; La Bonnardière identi-

85. See note 71.

fies this with an aberration of the traditional rites of Cybele held on March 24. A law of November 15, 408, forbade pagan rituals. *Tractate* 7 was preached on a Sunday; only 407 permits that. Hence these 38 sermons are dated in 406–407. To this group she adds *En in Ps* 21.2, holding that it was preached on the day after *Tractate* 12. This group then contains 39 sermons.

(42) There are no clear chronological references in *Tractates* 13 to 16. From a careful examination of scriptural references in *Tractate* 15 in comparison with other writings, she places this group in 407–408.

(43) *Tractates* 17 to 23 constitute an isolated block of sermons. *Tractate* 17 makes no reference to *Tractate* 16, and *Tractate* 23 ends abruptly with Jn 5.30 while *Tractate* 24 begins at Jn 6.5 with no reference to *Tractate* 23. The text is treated in the same manner as in certain anti-Arian works, such as the *Contra Sermonem Arianorum*. These seven sermons were delivered after 418.

(44) La Bonnardière argues that the series *Tractates* 24 to 54 were all preached after 418, probably from August to Lent in either 419–420 or 420–421. The heavy emphasis on Trinitarian heresies relates these sermons to the arrival of the Arian Goths in North Africa in 417. Scriptural exegesis, especially of Nm 20.11 and Is 52.3 as interpreted in the *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*, and the treatment of Rom 8.3, 2 Cor 5.21, and Lv 4 as a group, decisively date these sermons.

(45) Finally, she argues for the “oral character” of *Tractates* 55 to 124 which, she says, constitute a homogeneous group, all completed within a limited time. Yet she holds that these were neither preached to the people nor dictated, but belong to a third class which Augustine recommended in *DDC* 4.29.62, sermons given before clerics as guides for their sermons. From varied statements in several of the sermons, for example, that Augustine’s treatment of the location of unbaptized infants in heaven in *Tractate* 67 is the same as his treatment of that subject in the *De Natura et Origine Animae* which is dated 419–420, she would date this group after 419–420.

(46) D. F. Wright<sup>86</sup> challenges the dating for *Tractates* 19 through 23. In *Tractate* 19 Augustine deals briefly with Jn 5.19 and promises to treat it more extensively at another time. In *Tractate* 20 he discusses this verse but makes no reference to *Tractate* 19 and its promise. Then *Tractates* 21 and 22 continue to expound Jn 5.20–30. *Tractate* 23, after briefly dealing with Jn 5.31–40, returns at length to Jn 5.19 and quickly resumes 20–30; it also mentions a previous discussion of 5.19 as if that in *Tractate* 19 were meant rather than *Tractate* 20. This suggests that *Tractates* 20, 21, and 22 do not belong to this sequence of sermons but were somehow placed in the collection at a later date. Later references, for example, by Bede and Alcuin, and manuscript irregularities, support this conclusion. Wright does not presume to guess how these three sermons got into the text.

(47) M.-F. Berrouard<sup>87</sup> agrees with La Bonnardière on the dating of *Tractates* 1 to 16, but for different reasons. He also supports Wright in separating *Tractates* 20, 21, and 22 from the series. Because of the lack of references to Pelagianism and the sameness of argumentation with the *Contra Sermonem Arianorum*, he dates the three in 418–419. He then maintains that *Tractates* 17, 18, 19, and 23 through 54 constitute a group of sermons delivered sequentially. In these thirty-five sermons there are numerous references to Arianism and other Trinitarian heresies and frequent discussions of grace and sin, an anti-Pelagian exegesis. Augustine's anti-Arianism, however, is a nonpolemical and theoretical controversy; the Trinitarian heresies are used to clarify his exegesis and to strengthen his people's faith. In fact, Berrouard declares, Augustine has a somewhat cursory knowledge of Arianism.<sup>88</sup> A detailed examination of his argumentation in both the Arian and the Pelagian controversies in comparison with other writings indicates the years 413 to 416 for the thirty-five sermons. Since

86. D. Wright, "Tractatus 20–22 of St. Augustine's *In Iohannem*," JThS 15 (1964) 317–330.

87. M.-F. Berrouard, "La date des *Tractatus I–LIV in Iohannis Evangelium* de saint Augustin," RAug 7 (1971), 105–168.

88. "... un Arianisme de manuel de théologie," Ibid., 144.

*Tractate* 27 was delivered on an August 10 in Hippo, the year 414 seems the best date; this is the only sermon in the group for which it can be unquestionably demonstrated that Augustine was in Hippo.

(48) S. Poque<sup>89</sup> suggests a very precise dating for a group of thirteen sermons, that is, *En in Ps* 95 and 127 to 133 and *Tractates* 7 to 12, intercalated as Le Landais had shown them to be. For *En in Ps* 127 she proposes that the Felix Martyr honored therein is not Felix of Nola, as La Bonnardière and Le Landais had held, but one of the two martyrs of Abitinae whose feasts were celebrated on February 12 and 13. From liturgical references in *Tractates* 10, 11, and 12 she argues for the first week of Lent for these three sermons. Her conclusion is that the thirteen sermons in this group were given between February 13 and March 5 or 9 in 407.

### The Term "Tractate"

(49) The term "Tractate" (*tractatus*) in Latin Christian writings was a technical designation for a specific type of sermon, one which combined scriptural exegesis, preaching, spiritual commentary, and theological reflection, and which was intended to be delivered by the bishop to his congregation.<sup>90</sup> In the strictest sense this is the kind of sermon properly called a homily since it is generally brief and given as part of a liturgy.<sup>91</sup> As a literary type of sermon, in its more general sense, this "Tractate" form arose in a gradual development from the basic secular meaning of *tractatus*, any oral or written inves-

89. S. Poque, "Trois semaines de prédication a Hippone en février-mars 407," *RAug* 7 (1971) 169-187.

90. See Agaësse, 15-16; G. Bardy, "Tractare, Tractatus," *RSR* 33 (1946) 211-235; Berrouard, *Homélie I-XVI*, 25-29; and G. Doyle, "Augustine's Sermonic Method," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 39 (1977) 214-215.

91. *En In Ps* 118: *prooemium: . . . ad pertractationem eius accedo . . . Statui autem per sermones id agere, qui proferantur in populis, quas Graeci homilias vocant, " . . . I approach the pertractatio of it . . . However I decided to treat it through the kind of sermons which are delivered amidst the people, which the Greeks call homilies."* (CCL 40.1665)

tigation, examination, or study; it came to be particularly associated with the oral explanations of books or texts. Yet, because its technical sense is the result of a fairly lengthy development in meaning, the term is used in a variety of ways for kinds of sermons lacking exegesis.<sup>92</sup> In this collection of *Tractates* Augustine uses the term *tractatus* in its precise technical sense, and these 124 *Tractates on the Gospel of John* are a perfect example of this particular oratorical genre.

### Critical Text

(50) The text used for this translation of *Tractates 1–10* (and 11–27 forthcoming in Volume 79 of The Fathers of the Church series) is that of R. Willems, volume 36 in the Latin series of the Corpus Christianorum. Section divisions within each *Tractate* correspond to this edition but paragraphs have been added by the Editor. The CCL reprints, with exceedingly few changes, the 1680 text of the famed Benedictine Maurist edition of the works of Augustine; the Maurist text was also reprinted in PL 35. Willems's text unfortunately has a number of deficiencies;<sup>93</sup> yet, granting the need for a new, critical text, one still finds it the most usable text to date. Most problematic are the numerous typographical errors. Where these are significant to the translation, they are pointed out in the notes; otherwise the correct reading is assumed and translated without comment. No attempt has been made to incorporate alternate readings into the translation; where these have seemed significant or notably different, a footnote has called them to attention. Also I have augmented Willems's scriptural citations, *quantum per modicam scientiam meam atque investigationem poteram*.

(51) The translation of Augustine's scriptural quotations has

92. See C. Mohrmann, *Praedicare—Tractare—Sermo*, *La Maison-Dieu* 39 (1954) 97–107.

93. See, e.g., the reviews of G. Folliet, *REAug* 3 (1957) 403–405; C. Mohrmann, *VigC* 10 (1956) 68; and M. Van den Hout, *Augustiniana* 5 (1955) 296–308.

been conformed as far as his Latin text allows to the Douay Rheims version since that translation is closest to Augustine's biblical texts. Two modifications have been made in this practice, however. First, the wording has been made more contemporary, and, secondly, sometimes words, phrases, or entire sentences have been taken from the *New American Bible* (NAB), or the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) revision of the Challoner Rheims version of the New Testament where these translations seemed better suited to the contemporary ear.



PREFACE BY AN  
UNKNOWN AUTHOR



## PREFACE BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR<sup>1</sup>



THE GOSPELS EXCEL all the pages of divine Scripture; for the Law and the Prophets predicted what would be, but the gospel tells us that this did, in fact, come to completion. Now, among the writers of the Gospels, John stands out for his profundity in regard to the divine mysteries. For sixty-five years, from the time of our Lord's ascension down to the final days of Domitian, he preached the word of the Lord, orally, with no writing to assist him. But after the murder of Domitian, when, with Nerva's permission, he had returned to Ephesus from exile, at the insistent urging of the bishops of Asia, he wrote about the coeternal divinity of Christ with the Father in opposition to the heretics who, in his absence, had invaded his churches and were denying that Christ had existed before Mary. And for this reason he is rightly compared, in the figure of four animals,<sup>2</sup> to a flying eagle; for the eagle flies higher than the other birds and gazes at the rays of the sun with unflinching eyes.

1. The *Admonitio* of the Maurist edition of these *Tractates*, quoted by Willems, CCL 36.xiii–xiv, states that this preface first appeared in the Louvain edition, published in Antwerp in 1662. It also indicates that it appears with a few words changed, “*paucis mutatis verbis*,” in the commentaries on John by Bede and Alcuin. Both in the preface and the first chapter of Bede's *In Sancti Ioannis Evangelium Expositio* (PL 92.633–637) and in Alcuin's *Commentaria in Sancti Ioannis Evangelium*, in the *Epistula ad Gislam et Richtrudem* which with two other letters form a preface to this commentary, and in the opening sentences of the commentary itself (PL 100.740–745), some of the phrases, information, and ideas expressed are found in a form identical or very similar to this preface. Both Bede and Alcuin borrow freely, often exactly, from Augustine and other earlier commentators on John; consequently some of this material may come ultimately from Augustine himself. I include this preface with this translation because, by whomever it was composed whenever it was composed, it clearly reflects traditions concerning John that go back to the times of the Fathers; hence it may shed some light on Augustine's approach to John.

2. Cf. *Tractates* 15.1, 36.1 and 5, 40.1; Ez 1.5–10; and Rv 4.6–7.

(2) The other evangelists, indeed, who adequately relate the temporal birth of Christ and the temporal deeds which he performed as man, also said a few words about his divinity; like animals that are able to go about on foot, they walk with the Lord on earth. This man, however, tells a little about his temporal deeds, but rather concentrates his attention more sublimely upon the power of his divinity; and so he flies with the Lord to heaven. For he, who reclined upon the breast of the Lord at the Supper, more perfectly than the others drank the draught of heavenly wisdom from the very fount of the Lord's bosom.<sup>3</sup>

(3) Now John had certainly read the Gospels of the three Evangelists, and he approved their faith and truth. He saw that in their versions certain historical facts were missing, especially the deeds which the Lord had done at the very beginning of his preaching, at the time, that is, before John the Baptist was shut up in prison. John, therefore, as though these were omissions on the part of the others, writes about the things which Jesus did before John was imprisoned. But it was his special concern to demonstrate the divinity of Christ and the mystery of the Trinity. Now the three other Evangelists certainly described in considerable detail the Lord's temporal words and deeds which are especially effective for teaching morality in this life; they were concerned with the active life in which one labors to cleanse his heart for seeing God. John does, in fact, tell a few of the Lord's deeds; but certainly he gathers together in his Scripture with greater diligence those words of the Lord which reveal the unity of the Trinity and the happiness of eternal life.

(4) And so, by showing the value of the virtue of contemplation, he has accomplished the purpose of his preaching. For it is in contemplation that one is emptied that he may see God. This is, indeed, the John whom the Lord called away from the hazardous storm of marriage and to whom, a virgin, he entrusted his virgin mother.

3. Cf. *Tractates* 1.7 and 36.1; Jn 13.23 and 21.20.

TRACTATES  
*1–10*



## TRACTATE I

### *On John 1.1–5*



I CONSIDER what we have just heard read from the Apostle's text, namely, that "the natural man does not perceive the things that are of the Spirit of God,"<sup>1</sup> and as I reflect that among the crowd present here, among you, my beloved people,<sup>2</sup> there necessarily are many natural

1. Cf. 1. Cor 2.14. Here I follow NAB, translating "the natural man" rather than "the sensual man" as in the Donay version and the CCD. As Augustine defines *animalis*, both here and in section 4, but most clearly in *Tractate* 98.3, it designates the human person composed "of body and soul," *ex anima et carne*, that is, man solely in his human nature, not yet a spiritual man because he has not received "the spirit that is of God" and does not yet speak "in the doctrine of the Spirit" (1 Cor 2.12–13). See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 837–838. Also Cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 14.4 where he equates *animalis homo* with *carnalis homo* and cites each as an example of synecdoche and then says, "For from soul and from flesh, which are the parts of man, the whole which is man can be signified; and thus *animalis homo* is not one thing, *carnalis* another, but both are one and the same thing, that is man living according to man." See CCL 48.419; and FOTC 14.354–355.

2. Late Latin used abstract nouns both as titles of address and as third person collective nouns to designate persons addressed. In this usage the abstract noun is often modified by a second person possessive adjective. Hence *caritas vestra*, "your love." Wherever this phrase occurs herein, it is translated as a vocative, "my beloved people," or simply "beloved people." Other such abstract phrases are treated in the same way. For a thorough treatment of this peculiar usage see C. I. Balmus, *Étude sur le style de saint Augustin dans les Confessions et la Cité de Dieu* (Paris, 1930), 26–30; A. Blaise, *Manuel du Latin Chrétien* (Strasbourg, 1955), 21; and M. B. O'Brien, *Titles of Address in Christian Latin Epistolography to 543 A.D.* (Washington, D.C., 1930). Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 127 and 838, would retain the abstract noun, "dans cette foule présente de votre Charité," arguing that this term is used intentionally by Augustine to affirm the unity of his congregation with the universal Church through love over against the divisive separations of the Donatists. This is an appealing proposition; yet since Augustine, in his sermons and other writings as well as in his letters, follows the later usage, employing other nouns and not only *caritas* in this way, I have adhered to the normal Late Latin usage.

men whose understanding is still only according to the flesh<sup>3</sup> and who are not yet able to raise themselves to a spiritual understanding, I am very much at a loss how, even with the Lord's largess, I may say or explain in my small measure what has been read from the gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The fact is, the natural man does not understand this. What then, my brothers? Shall we remain silent because of this? Why, therefore, is there a reading, if we are going to remain silent? Or why listen, if there is no explanation? And what's more, why is it explained, if it is not understood? And so, because, on the other hand, I have no doubt that there are among you some who have the ability not only to grasp an explanation but also to understand it before the explanation is made, I shall not cheat those who can grasp it; but at the same time I am apprehensive about wasting the attention of those who cannot. Ultimately, God's mercy will be present so that there will perhaps be benefit enough for all, and each person will grasp what he can. In fact, the speaker, too, says what he is capable of saying. For who can say it as it is?

(2) I dare to say, my brothers, that perhaps not even John himself said it as it is; but even he spoke as far as he could. For he spoke about God, he, a human being, inspired by God, to be sure, but still a human being. Because he was inspired, he said something; if he had not been inspired, he would have said nothing. Now since he was an inspired human being, he did not express the entire reality, but said what a human being was capable of saying.

2. For this John, my dearest brothers, was one of those mountains about which it has been written, "Let the mountains receive peace for your people; and the hills justice."<sup>4</sup> The mountains are eminent souls; the hills are little souls.<sup>5</sup> But the mountains receive peace for this very reason, so that

3. Cf. Rom 8.5.

4. Cf. Ps 71.3.

5. Cf. *En in Ps* 71.5-6 (CCL 39.974-975) where Augustine interprets this verse similarly and also defines peace and justice, though with no mention of faith. Also cf. *En in Ps* 124.5 and 10 (CCL 40.1838-1839 and 1843-1844).

the hills can receive justice. What is the justice which the hills receive? Faith, because "the just man lives by faith."<sup>6</sup> The lesser souls, however, would not receive faith if the greater souls, who were called mountains, were not illuminated by wisdom itself, so that they can convey to the little ones what the little ones are able to grasp, and so that the hills can live by faith because the mountains receive peace. By these very mountains it was said to the Church, "Peace be with you." And the mountains themselves, in announcing peace to the Church, did not set themselves apart in regard to him from whom they received peace<sup>7</sup> so that they might announce peace truly and not deceitfully.

3. There are indeed other mountains which cause shipwreck; and whenever anyone directs his ship there, it is destroyed. For when those in danger see the land, it is easy to try as it were for land; but sometimes the land is seen on a mountain and rocks lie hidden beneath the mountain. And when someone tries for the mountain, he comes by chance upon the rocks; and there he finds not shelter but sorrow.

(2) So there have been certain mountains, and they have appeared great among men. But they have both created heresies and schisms, and divided the Church of God. These who have divided the Church of God were not those mountains about which it was said, "Let the mountains receive peace for your people." For how have they received peace who have rent unity asunder?

4. Those, however, who have received peace in order to announce it to the people have looked upon wisdom itself insofar as human hearts can attain what "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor what has not ascended into the heart of man."<sup>8</sup> If it did not ascend into the heart of man, how did it ascend into the heart of John? Or is it that John wasn't a man? Or perhaps it did not ascend into the heart of John but the heart of John ascended to it? For what ascends into man's heart comes to

6. Cf. Hab 2.4; Rom 1.17; Gal 3.11; and Hb 10.38.

7. Cf. Jn 20.19.

8. Cf. 1 Cor 2.9, quoting Is 64.3.

man from below; that, however, to which the heart of man ascends, is above as regards man. Even so, my brothers, one can say that if it ascended into the heart of John, if one can say that in any way at all, then it rose up into the heart of John insofar as John himself was not a man. What does this mean, he was not a man? To the extent that he began to be an angel. For all holy men are angels because they are the messengers of God.<sup>9</sup>

(2) What, then, does the Apostle say to the carnal and the natural who have not the power to perceive what the things of God are? "For whenever you say, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, are you not men?"<sup>10</sup> What did he want to make them if he was reproaching them because they were men? Do you want to know what he wanted to make them? Hear it in the Psalms: "I have said, you are gods, and all sons of the most high."<sup>11</sup> To this, then, God calls us: not to be mere men. But then we will not be men for the better if first we recognize that we are men, that is, that we may rise to that height from our lowliness, lest whenever we think ourselves to be something, though we are nothing,<sup>12</sup> we not only do not accept that we are not, but even lose what we are.

5. And so, my brothers, John, too, was one of those mountains, who said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This mountain had received peace; he was contemplating the divinity of the Word. What kind of mountain was he? How high? He had risen beyond all the mountain peaks of the world; he had risen beyond all the fields of the sky; he had risen beyond all the heights of the constellations; he had risen beyond all the choirs and legions of angels. For unless he had risen beyond all the things which have been created, he would not have reached him through whom all things were made.

(2) You cannot conceive what he has risen beyond unless

9. Augustine here, as often, uses "angel" in its Greek sense of messenger, designating an office, not a metaphysical being. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 132.

10. Cf. 1 Cor 3.4.

11. Ps 81.6.

12. Cf. Gal 6.3.

you see where he arrived. Do you ask about the sky and the earth? They were made. Do you ask about these things that are in the sky and the earth? Much more so, of course, they, too, were made. Do you ask about spiritual beings, about the Angels, the Archangels, the Thrones, the Dominions, the Virtues, and the Principalities? Even they have been made. When the Psalm enumerated all these things, it concluded thus: "He spoke, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created."<sup>13</sup> If "He spoke and they were made," it was through the Word that they were made; if, moreover, they were made through the Word, the heart of John could not have reached that which he says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," unless he had risen beyond all things which were made through the Word.

(3) What kind of mountain was this, then? How holy? How high among those mountains who have received peace for the people of God in order that the hills might be able to receive justice?

6. Consider, then, my brothers, whether perhaps John is one of the mountains about which we sang a little while ago, "I have lifted my eyes to the mountains, from which help shall come to me."<sup>14</sup> Therefore, my brothers, if you want to understand, lift your eyes to this mountain; that is, raise yourselves up to the Evangelist, raise yourselves up to his meaning. But although these mountains receive peace, even so he cannot be at peace who places his hope in man;<sup>15</sup> do not raise your eyes to the mountain in such a way that you think your hope must be put in man.

(2) And say "I have lifted my eyes to the mountains from which help shall come to me" in such a way that you add to it immediately "My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth."<sup>16</sup> Therefore let us lift our eyes to the mountains from which help shall come to us; and yet it is not the mountains themselves in which our hope is to be placed, for the mountains receive what they may present to us. Therefore we

13. Cf. Ps 148.5.

15. Cf. Jer 17.5.

14. Ps 120.1.

16. Ps 120.2.

must put our hope in that place from which the mountains also receive. When we lift our eyes to the Scriptures, because the Scriptures were delivered through men,<sup>17</sup> we lift our eyes to the mountains from which help will come to us; and yet since they who wrote the Scriptures were themselves men, they were not providing enlightenment from themselves. Rather, he was the true light who enlightens every man coming into this world.<sup>18</sup>

(3) A mountain also was that illustrious John the Baptist who said, "I am not the Christ."<sup>19</sup> In order that no one, placing hope in the mountain, might fall from him who illuminates the mountains, he also acknowledged and said, "For of his fullness we have all received."<sup>20</sup> So you ought to say "I have lifted my eyes to the mountains, from which help shall come to me" not to attribute to the mountains the help which comes to you, but, rather, immediately add, "My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth."

7. Therefore, my brothers, I would direct my remarks to this purpose: When you have lifted up your heart to the Scriptures, when the words of the gospel rang out, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and the rest which was read, you may understand that you have lifted your eyes to the mountains. For unless the mountains said these things, you would not find any means by which you might think of those things at all. Thus help came to you from the mountains, so that you, too, might hear these things.

(2) But you are not yet able to understand what you have heard. Implore help from the Lord who made heaven and earth; for the mountains were able to speak in such a way that they could not themselves enlighten, since they, too, have been enlightened by hearing. Consequently, he who said these words received them—that John, my brothers, who reclined upon the breast of the Lord<sup>21</sup> and who drank from the breast of the Lord that which he might give us to drink. But he has

17. Cf. 2 Cor 3.3.

19. Cf. Jn 1.20.

21. Cf. Jn 13.23; 21.20.

18. Cf. Jn 1.9.

20. Cf. Jn 1.16.

given you words to drink; you, however, ought to receive understanding from that source from which he himself who gave you to drink had drunk, so that you may lift your eyes to the mountains from which help will come to you, that from there you might receive the chalice, as it were, that is, the Word given to drink; and yet, because your help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth, you might fill your breast from the source from which he filled his, from which you have said, "My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth."<sup>22</sup> Let him then, who can, fill. My brothers, this have I said, let each one lift his heart in whatever way he sees it as proper, and let him receive what is said.

(3) But perhaps you will say this, that I am more present to you than is God. Perish the thought! He is by far more present; for I appear to your eyes, he supervises your consciences.<sup>23</sup> [Turn] your ears to me, your heart to him, so that you may fill both. Look, you lift your eyes and your bodily senses to us, and yet not to us, for we are not of those mountains, but to the gospel itself, to the Evangelist himself. But [lift] your heart to the Lord to be filled. And let each and every one of you so lift that he sees what he lifts and where he lifts.

(4) What did I mean, what he lifts and where he lifts? Let him see what kind of heart he lifts up—for he lifts it up to the Lord—in order that it may not fall, weighted down by the baggage of carnal pleasures, before it has been uplifted. But does every man see that he bears a burden of flesh? Let him strive by continence to cleanse what he lifts up to God. For "blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."<sup>24</sup>

8. Look now, what profit is gained that there have sounded forth the words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"? We, too, have

22. Ps 120.2.

23. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 839–840, sees this as a reference to Christ as the inner teacher. This concept is most expressly explicated by Augustine in the *De Magistro* 11.38, 12.40, and 13.46 (CCL 29.195–196, 197–199, 202–203; and ACW 9.177, 179–181, 185–186). See also, Gilson, 66–76, especially, 74; and Hardy, 138–144.

24. Mt 5.8.

said words when we spoke. Was the Word with God such a word? These words which we said sounded forth and passed away, did they not? Therefore did the Word of God also sound forth and come to an end? How were all things made through it<sup>25</sup> and without it was made nothing? How is that which was created by it governed by it if it sounded forth and passed away? What kind of Word is it, then, which is both spoken and does not pass away? May I have your attention, my beloved people? This is an important matter. From daily use words have been cheapened by us; for words, by sounding forth and passing away, have been cheapened and seem to be nothing other than words. There is also in man himself a word which remains within; for it is sound which goes out of the mouth. There is a word which is said truly in the spirit—that which you understand from the sound, but is not the sound itself. Notice, I say a word when I say “God.” How short is what I have just said, three letters and one syllable!<sup>26</sup> Is this actually the whole reality that God is, three letters and one syllable? Or is this as trifling as what is understood in this is precious?

(2) What happened in your heart when you had heard “God”? What happened in my heart when I said “God”? A certain great and perfect substance was in our thoughts, which transcends every changeable creature of flesh and soul. And if I should say to you, “Is God subject to change or is he immutable?” you will immediately answer, “Far be it from me either to believe or to imagine that God is subject to change. God is immutable.” Your soul, although small, although perhaps still carnal, could only reply to me that God is immutable. But every created being is changeable. How were you able, therefore, to have a spark of understanding of that which is above every created being so that you, with certainty, reply to me that God is immutable? What, then, is in your heart when you think of a certain substance that is living, eternal, om-

25. Retention of the neuter gender of the Latin *Verbum* seems more appropriate to Augustine's reasoning in this passage since he has not yet asserted the personal nature of the Word, although total consistency is found neither in the Latin text nor in this translation.

26. The Latin word is *Deus*, four letters and two syllables.

nipotent, infinite, everywhere present, everywhere whole, nowhere confined? When you think of these attributes, this is the word about God in your heart.

(3) But is this that sound which consists of three letters and one syllable? Therefore what other things are said and pass away, these are sounds, these are letters, these are syllables. This word which sounds forth passes away. But what the sound has signified and what is present in the thought of the one who said it and in the understanding of the one who heard it, this remains when the sounds have passed away.

9. Direct your attention again to that word. If you can have a word in your heart, as if a design born in your mind, so that your mind gives birth to a design, the design may be present there, an offspring of your mind, so to speak, a son of your heart. For the heart first begets a design in order for you to construct some building, to erect some massive structure upon the land.

(2) 'The design has already been born, and yet the work is unfinished. You see what you are going to do, but another one does not admire it except when you have made and built the huge structure and brought the building to its finish and completion. Men look at a fine building and admire the design of the builder; they are amazed at what they see and delight in what they do not see, for who is there who can see a design? So, if human design is praised because of some great building, do you wish to see what a design of God is the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, the Word of God?

(3) Look at the structure of the universe: see what was made by the Word and then you will recognize what the nature of the Word is. Look at these two bodies of the world, the sky and the earth. Who can describe in words the splendor of the sky? Who can describe in words the abundance of the earth? Who can adequately praise the variation of seasons? Who can adequately praise the power of seeds? You see what I pass over in silence for fear that if I recount particulars for too long, I may perhaps mention fewer things than you can think of yourselves. From this structure, then, observe what the nature of the Word is through which it was made. And it was not the

only thing made; for all these things are seen because they affect the physical senses. By that Word also the Angels were made; by that Word the Archangels were made, too, and the Powers, the Thrones, the Dominions, and the Principalities. By the Word were made all things. From this consider what the nature of the Word is.

10. Perhaps someone or other now comes back at me, "And who thinks of this Word?" As for yourself, when you hear "the Word," do not therefore fashion it into some cheap image, so to speak, and do not imagine words that you hear every day: that man said such words; he spoke such words; you tell me such words. For by constantly using the names of words, they have, as it were, lost their value. And when you hear "In the beginning was the Word," lest you think it something common as you have become accustomed to think when you usually hear human words, hearken to what you should think: "And the Word was God."

11. Let some one of the unbelieving Arians<sup>27</sup> come forward now and say that the Word of God was made. How can it happen that the Word of God was made when God made all things through the Word? If even the Word of God itself<sup>28</sup> was made, through what other Word was it made? If you say that there is a Word of the Word, through which that [Word] was made, I say that this itself is the only Son of God. If you deny there is a Word of the Word, grant that that through which all things were made was itself not made. For that through which all things were made could not be made through itself.

(2) Therefore believe the Evangelist. For he could have said, "In the beginning God made the Word," just as Moses said, "In

27. The Arians, adherents of a major fourth-century Trinitarian heresy, created by, and named for, Arius, a priest from Alexandria (c. 250 A.D.—336 A.D.). Their major tenet was that divine being was uncreated, unbegotten, and unique, and since the Logos was begotten, Christ was not true God but a creature who had a beginning, albeit a perfect creature surpassing all other creatures. The Holy Spirit was also a creature produced by the Son, inferior to, and different from, both Son and Father. This heresy was condemned by the First Nicaean Council in 325 A.D. For a brief account and bibliography cf. H. DeClercq, "Arianism," NCE 1:791–794.

28. Cf. note 25.

the beginning God made heaven and earth.”<sup>29</sup> And he enumerates all things in this way: “God said, ‘Let it be made, and it was made.’” Who do we understand in “He said?” Why, God, of course! And what was made? Some creature. Between the speaking of God and the making of a creature what is there through which it was made except the Word? For God said, “Let it be made and it was made.” This Word is unchangeable. Even though changeable things are made through the Word, [the Word] itself is unchangeable.

12. So do not believe that that by which all things were made was itself made, lest you may not be made anew through the Word by which all things are made anew. For you have already been made through the Word, but you need to be made anew through the Word. But if your faith in the Word is deficient, you will not be able to be made anew through the Word. And even if creation through the Word has happened to you, so that you have been effected through it, yet it is through yourself that you become defective. If you become defective through yourself, let the one who has effected you re-create you. If you make yourself worse through yourself, let the one who created you re-create you. But how would he re-create you through the Word if you should have the wrong sense of the Word?

(2) The Evangelist says, “In the beginning was the Word,” and you say, “In the beginning the Word was made.” He says, “All things were made through it,” and you say that the Word itself also was made. The Evangelist could have said, “In the beginning the Word was made.” But what does he say? “In the beginning was the Word.” If it was, it was not made so that all things might be made through it and without it nothing. If, therefore, “The Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” if you cannot imagine what it is, put it off so that you may grow up. That is solid food; take milk that you may be nourished, that you may be strong enough to take solid food.

13. Well now, my brothers, as for what follows: “All things

29. Cf. Gn 1.1.

were made through him and without him was made nothing," take care that you do not imagine that nothing is something. For many are accustomed through a poor understanding of "without him was made nothing" to think that nothing is something. Certainly sin was not made through him, and it is clear that sin is nothing and that men become nothing when they sin. And an idol was not made through the Word. Indeed an idol has a certain human shape, but man himself has been made through the Word. For the form of man in the idol was not made through the Word, and it has been written, "We know that an idol is nothing."<sup>30</sup> These things, then, were not made through the Word; but whatever things were made through the agency of nature, whatever exist in creation, all things of all kinds whatsoever which have their place in the sky, which shine on high, which fly under the heavens, and whatever things move in the whole of nature, each and every creature—I shall say it more plainly, I shall say it, my brothers, that you may understand—from the angel to the grub worm. What is there among creatures more magnificent than an angel? What is there among creatures lower than a grub worm? Through him through whom the angel was made the grub worm was also made.

(2) But an angel is suited to heaven; the worm, to earth. He who created also arranged. If he had put the worm in heaven, you would reprove him; if he had purposed that angels spring up from decaying flesh, you would reprove him. And yet God almost does this and he is not to be reproved. For all men who are born of flesh, what are they but worms? And from the worms he makes angels. For if the Lord himself says, "But I am a worm, and not a man,"<sup>31</sup> who hesitates to say this which was also written in Job: "How much more is man rottenness and the son of man a worm."<sup>32</sup> First he said, "Man is rottenness," and then, "the son of a man a worm." Because a worm springs from rottenness, for that reason "man is rottenness" and "the son of a man a worm."

30. Cf. 1 Cor 8.4.

32. Cf. Jb 25.6.

31. Cf. Ps 21.7.

(3) Look and see what he was willing to become on your account, he who “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Why did he become this for you? That you who were unable to chew might suck. Wholly in this way, then, my brothers, understand [the words]: “All things were made through him and without him was made nothing.” For through him absolutely every creature, the greater and the lesser, was made; through him were made the things above, the things below; through him were made the spiritual and the corporal. There is no shape, no structure, no union of parts, no substance whatsoever which can have weight, number, measure unless it is through that Word, and by that creator Word to whom it was said, “you have ordered all things by measure and number and weight.”<sup>33</sup>

14. Let no one, therefore, deceive you, when you are perhaps annoyed at flies. For some have been scoffed at by the devil and caught with flies. Fowlers, as you know, are accustomed to put flies on snares<sup>34</sup> to deceive hungry birds; so, too, these men have been deceived by the devil with flies.

(2) To show what I mean, one day some fellow was being annoyed by flies. A Manichean found him in his state of annoyance; and when he said that he could not endure flies and hated them with a passion, immediately the Manichean [said], “Who made them?” But because he was in a state of annoyance and hated them, he dared not say, “God made them.” However, he was a Catholic. The other man immediately suggested, “If God did not make them, who made them?” “Surely,” says he, “I do believe that the devil made flies.” And the other immediately [said], “If the devil made the flies, as I see you admit since you understand the matter wisely, who made the bee which is a little larger than the fly?” He dared not say that God made the bee but did not make the fly be-

33. Wis 11.21 (NAB, 11.20).

34. The Latin word is *muscipula* which literally means “mousetrap,” compounded from *mus* and *capere*, “to catch a mouse.” Although in Late Latin the word had extended its meaning to any kind of trap, still Augustine promotes a word play as though the noun *musca*, “fly,” were also to be seen in the word. A second word play occurs based on the verb *capere* in the compound words *decipere*, *aucupes*, and *muscipula*.

cause it is a very closely related matter. He [the Manichean] led from a bee to a locust, from a locust to a lizard, from a lizard to a bird; from a bird he proceeded to a sheep, then to a cow, then to an elephant, and finally to man. And he persuaded a man that man was not made by God.<sup>35</sup> So that wretched fellow, when he was annoyed at flies, became a fly whom the devil possessed.

(3) Indeed, it is said that Beelzebub means prince of flies; and it has been written of them, "Dying flies spoil the sweetness of the oil."<sup>36</sup>

15. What then, brothers, why have I said these things? Close the ears of your heart against the tricks of the enemy. Understand that God made all things and arranged them in their gradations. But why do we suffer many evils from a creature which God made? Because we have sinned against God. And do angels suffer these things? Perhaps we also might not fear those things in such a life. As for your own punishment, accuse your sin, not the judge. For it is because of pride that God created that most worthless and least of creatures, to torment us, so that, since man has been proud and vaunted himself against God and, although he is mortal, has struck terror into a mortal man, and, although he is a man, has not recognized his neighbor as a man, since he has exalted himself, he may be laid low by fleas.

(2) For what reason do you puff yourself up with human pride? A man insulted you, and you swelled up and were angered. Rid yourself of the fleas that you may sleep. Find out who you are! For that you may know, brothers, that these things which would bother us were created to enable us to control our pride [remember], God could have tamed the

35. The Manichaeans held that man's body was created by powers from the realm of evil not by the good God of light, in order to entrap the particles of the light that are the souls of men. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 841–842; F. Decret, *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine* (Paris, 1970), 210–212, 218–219, 254–257, 259–262; J. Ries, "Manichaeism," NCE 9.157; and Widengren, 59.

36. Cf. Eccl 10.1 (NAB, 9.18). Augustine's Latin text reads *muscae moriturae*, literally, "the flies which are about to die." Optatus of Milevis, *De Schismate Donatistarum* 7.4 (CSEL 26.173–174) has the same reading.

proud people of Pharaoh with bears, with lions, or with snakes; he sent flies and frogs upon them<sup>37</sup> that their pride might be tamed by the most ignoble of things.

16. "All things" then, my brothers, "all things"—each and every one—"were made though him and without him was made nothing." But how were all things made through him? "That which was made, in him is life."<sup>38</sup> Now this can be taken as follows: "That which was made in him, is life." And if we express the sentence in this way, everything is life. For what was not made in him? For he himself is the wisdom of God and in the Psalm it is said, "You have made all things in wisdom."<sup>39</sup> If, then, Christ is the wisdom of God and the Psalm says, "You have made all things in wisdom," as all things were made through him, so they were made in him.

(2) If, therefore, dearest brothers, both all things were made in him and that which was made in him, is life, then earth, too, is life, and wood, too, is life. We do, indeed, say that wood is life, but in the sense of the wood of the cross from which we have received life. Then stone, too, is life. It is shameful to understand the sentence like this, lest that same most foul sect of Manichaeans should again steal upon us and say that a stone has life and a wall has a soul, and a rope has a soul, and wool and clothes. For in their mad ravings they are accustomed to say [this]; and, when they have been repulsed and rejected, as if speaking from Scripture, they declare, "Why was it said, 'That which was made in him, is life?' For if

37. Cf. Ex 7-8.

38. The lack of any sort of systematic punctuation in ancient manuscripts could and did, as here, create difficult problems in interpretation. Augustine himself in *DDC* 3.2.2-5 (CCL 32.77-79; and *FOOTC* 5.117-120) says that when such ambiguities occur, one ought to consult first the rule of faith established in clearer passages or by the authority of the Church; and if that is lacking, then to use the context; and if both fail to provide a solution, to exercise judgment from one's knowledge or careful analysis. See also, Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 843-844, and M. Comeau, *Saint Augustine exégète du quatrième évangile* (Paris, 1930), 74-76. With this particular sentence from John's Gospel the problem persists as a comparison of various translations illustrates; a good brief summary of the problem can be found in R. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, i-xii in *The Anchor Bible* (New York, 1966), 29.6-7.

39. Cf. Ps 103.24.

all things were made in him, all things are life." Let them not mislead you. Read it thus: "That which was made"—punctuate here, and after that put—"in him is life."

(3) What does this mean? The earth was made; but the earth itself which was made is not life. There is, however, in wisdom itself, in a spiritual way, a certain reason by which the earth was made: this is life.

17. I shall explain this to you, my beloved people, as well as I can. A carpenter makes a chest. First he has the chest in his creative knowledge.<sup>40</sup> For if he did not have the chest in his creative knowledge, from what source would he produce it in constructing it? But the chest exists in his creative knowledge in such a way that it is not the very same chest which is seen by the eyes. In his creative knowledge it exists invisibly; in the product it will exist visibly. Look now, it has come to exist in the product. Does it cease to exist in [the carpenter's] creative knowledge? Both the one came into existence in the product and at the same time the other which exists in his creative knowledge remains. For the one chest can rot, and from that other one which exists in his creative knowledge, another can again be made.

40. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 162–165, has "dans son idée"; H. Browne in *Homilies on the Gospel According to St. John, and his First Epistle by St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo*, LF 26 (1848), has "in theory"; and J. Gibb, *Lectures or Tractates on the Gospel According to St. John*, vol. 1, *Tractates 1–37* in *The Works of Aurelius Augustine*, 10 (Edinburgh, 1873) has simply "in design." One might well translate the phrase very literally "in his art." This passage is difficult to translate since neither "design" nor "theory" nor "art" nor "*idée*" precisely expresses what Augustine is trying to say. *Arts* in Latin often designates a kind of knowledge of some particular sort, as e.g., defined by Probus in H. Keil, *Grammatici Latini* (Leipzig, 1864), 4.47; and especially a knowledge of precepts that leads to some concrete end result, as, e.g., defined by Asper in Keil, (Leipzig, 1868), 5.547. When this Latin concept is combined with Platonic concepts, then the artist possesses a knowledge, gained through intellection, of the perfect form or idea involved in his artistic work, as well as a knowledge of the principles of design, proportion, and order, combined with the skills that enable him to produce the desired object from the unshaped matter with which he starts, that is, art is a creative knowledge. See Plato, *Republic* 597 and Plotinus, *Enneads* 4.3.10 and 29–30, 5.8.1, and 5.9.11 in the Teubner edition of R. Volkmann (Leipzig, 1883); see also, R. O'Connell, *Art and the Christian Intelligence in St. Augustine* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 28–49, especially 31–32.

(2) Pay attention then to the chest in the creative knowledge and the chest in the product. The chest in the product is not life; the chest in the creative knowledge is life. For the soul of the craftsman, in which exist all these things before they are produced, has life. So therefore, dearest brothers, because the wisdom of God, through which all things were made, contains all things in accordance with his creative knowledge before he constructs all things, it follows that whatever things are made through this creative knowledge are not immediately life; but whatever has been made is life in him. You see the earth; there exists an earth in his creative knowledge. You see the sky; there exists a sky in his creative knowledge. You see the sun and the moon; these, too, exist in his creative knowledge. But externally they are bodies; in his creative knowledge they are life.

(3) Look into this if you are at all able to; for a great matter has been expressed. And if [it has been expressed] by me who am not great or through me who am not great, nonetheless [it comes] from one who is great.<sup>41</sup> For these words have not been expressed by me who am small; but that one is not small to whom I look that I may speak. Let each person grasp as he can, as far as he can; and he who cannot grasp, let him nourish it in his heart that he may be able to. With what is he to nourish it? Let him nourish it with milk so that he may arrive at solid food. Let him not withdraw from Christ, born through flesh, until he arrives at Christ, born from the one Father, the Word, God with God, through whom all things were made. For that is life which in him is the light of men.

18. For this follows: "And the life was the light of men." From this very life men are enlightened. Cattle are not en-

41. Browne, 16, suggests that the great one here is perhaps Plato, not as an authority on Christian knowledge, but still as one who had some true knowledge that was useful to the Christian exegete. He refers to *De Diversis Quaestionibus* 46 and *Retractationes* 1.3.2 in support. It seems to me, however, that Augustine has the Lord, the Word, in mind to whom he constantly refers as the one who gives him his understanding, as in section 1, and from whom comes help to all Christians, "My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth" (Ps 120.2), as in section 6. The last two sentences in this section support this view.

lightened because cattle do not have rational minds capable of seeing wisdom. But man, made in the image of God, has a rational mind through which he is capable of recognizing wisdom. Therefore that life through which all things were made, that very life is light, and not the light of every living being but of men. Wherefore, a little later, [Scripture] says, "It was the true light which enlightens every man who comes into this world."<sup>42</sup>

(2) By that light was enlightened John the Baptist; by the very same light, John the Evangelist himself was also enlightened. He was filled with that very light who said, "I am not the Christ; but he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to unfasten."<sup>43</sup> By that light he had been enlightened who said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Thus that life is the light of men.

19. But, perhaps, there are slow-witted hearts that cannot yet receive this light because they are weighed down by their sins so that they cannot see it. Let them not think therefore, that the light is absent, as it were, because they cannot see it; for they themselves, because of their sins, are darkness. "And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." Thus, my brothers, just as when a blind man is placed in the sun, the sun is present to him, but he is absent to the sun, so every slow-witted person, every evil person, every ungodly person is blind in his heart. Wisdom is present; but it is present with a blind man. It is absent to his eyes, not because it is absent to him but because he is absent from it. What then is he to do? Let him cleanse that<sup>44</sup> by which God can be seen. Just as if he could not see because he had dirty and sore eyes, with dust or mucus or smoke irritating them, the doctor would say to him, "Cleanse from your eye whatever foul thing is there that you may be able to see the light of your eyes."

42. Jn 1.9. NAB has a different phrasing based on the Greek text since the Greek *erchámenon* can modify *phōs* as well as *anthrōpon*; but in the Latin text *venientem* can modify only *hominem* and not at all *lumen*.

43. Cf. Jn 1.20 and 27.

44. i.e., his heart.

(2) Dust, mucus, smoke, [these] are sins and iniquities. Remove all these from there<sup>45</sup> and you will see the wisdom which is present because God is this very wisdom, and it has been said, "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."<sup>46</sup>

45. i.e., from your heart.

46. Mt 5.8.

## TRACTATE 2

*On John 1.6–14*



IT IS A GOOD THING for us, brothers, to discuss<sup>1</sup> the text of the divine Scriptures, especially the holy gospel, as far as possible, without omitting any passage, and to be nourished according to our capacity, and then to minister to you from that source from which we ourselves also are nourished. We remember that on the last Lord's day we discussed the first chapter, that is, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was made nothing. That which was made, in him is life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." I believe the discussion had gotten to this point; let all of you who were present recall. And those of you who were not present, believe us and these who wanted to be present.

(2) Now then, because we cannot always go back over everything for the sake of those who want to hear what follows, and because to repeat earlier matters is both a burden to them and shortchanges what follows, let those who were not present favor us and not demand the past, but let them, together with those who were there, listen now to the present discussion.

2. [The gospel] continues: "There was a man sent by God whose name was John." Now, dearest brothers, the things which were said before were said about the ineffable divinity of Christ, and nearly ineffably. For who will grasp, "In the be-

1. *Pertractemus*. On the meaning of the verb *tractare* and its derivatives see the Introduction (49).

ginning was the Word, and the Word was with God"?<sup>2</sup> And that the noun "word" may not lose its worth in your eyes in the usual practice of everyday words, "And the Word was God." This Word is the self-sameness<sup>3</sup> about which we spoke at great length yesterday. And may God grant that by speaking, even at such length, we may have brought something to your hearts. "In the beginning was the Word." He<sup>4</sup> is the self-sameness; he is in the same manner. As he is, so he always is. He cannot be changed; that is, he is.<sup>5</sup> And he said this, his name, to his servant Moses: "I am who am" and "He who is, sent me."<sup>6</sup>

(2) Who then will grasp this since you see that all mortal things are changeable, since you see that not only are bodies varied in their characteristics,<sup>7</sup> by birth, by growth, by decline, and by death, but also souls themselves are stretched and torn asunder by the influence of diverse inclinations, since you see

2. Jn 1.1.

3. The Latin has *idipsum*, but in this *Tractate* Augustine gives it a very special meaning as I have tried to indicate by my translation. His explanation here is very brief and obscure to the reader who has not seen *En in Ps* 121.5–6; this is the homily which he delivered "yesterday" and it is the only place in his writings where he explains this *idipsum*. Since his congregation had already heard the *enarratio*, there was no need to repeat the lengthy discussion which is given therein. There he explains this idea, in part, as follows: "What is 'the self-sameness'? That which is always in the same manner; that which is not now one thing, now another. What then is 'the self-sameness' except that which is? What is that which is? That which is eternal. For what is always now in one way, and now in another way, is not, because it does not abide; it does not wholly not exist, but it does not exist in the highest degree. And what is that which is except he who, when he was sending Moses, said to him, 'I am who am'? What is this except he who, when his servant said, 'Lo, you are sending me. If the people should say to me, 'Who has sent you?' what shall I say to them?' He did not want his name said other than 'I am who am,' and he went on and said, 'Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, 'He who is has sent me to you.'" See, 'the self-sameness': 'I am who am. He who is has sent me to you.'" (*En in Ps* 121.5.11–22, quoting Ex 3.13–14, (CCL 40.1805).) See Berrouard, *Homélies* 1–xvi, 845–848. J. Sweetnam, in "A Note on *In Idipsum* in St. Augustine," *Modern Schoolman* 30 (1952–53) 328–331, shows the Neo-Platonic concept that Augustine gives this word but does not suggest an English equivalent.

4. Cf. *Tractate* 1.8, note 25.

5. Some manuscripts and some editions read, "that is, he is God."

6. Cf. Ex 3.14. CCD and NAB both read: "I am sent me."

7. The Latin word *qualitates* may have a philosophic sense here, "qualities" or "properties."

that men can both gain wisdom if they draw near to its light and heat and can lose wisdom if they withdraw from it because of an evil influence? Therefore since you see that all these things are changeable, what is that which is except that which transcends all things which are in such a way that they are not?

(3) Who, then, can grasp this? Or, in whatever way someone has exerted the powers of his mind to touch that which is, in whatever way he can, who can attain that which he has somehow or other touched with his mind? For it is as though one could see his homeland from afar, and a sea lay in between; he sees where to go but has not the means to go. So we wish to reach that stability of ours where that which is is because this alone always is just as it is; [but] the sea of this world lies in between where we are going, even though we already see where we are going. But many do not even see where they are to go.

(4) And so, that there might be also a way by which we might go, he came from him to whom<sup>8</sup> we desired to go. And what has he done? He has provided the wood by which we may cross the sea. For no one can cross the sea of this world unless carried by the cross of Christ. And even the man with poor eyesight sometimes embraces this cross. And he who does not see from afar where to go, let him not depart from that [cross], and it will lead him over.

3. Therefore, my brothers, I would implant this in your hearts: if you wish to live in a devout and Christian way, adhere to Christ according to that which he became for us, so that you may reach him according to that which he is and according to that which he was. He came to us that he might become this for us; for he became for us this upon which the weak may be carried and may cross the sea of the world and reach their homeland where there will be no need of a ship because no sea is crossed. It is better, then, not to see with the

8. The Latin text reads *venit inde ad quem*. *Inde* in Christian Latin frequently carries a personal connotation as translated here. The phrase could mean, however, "He came from the place to which . . ."

mind that which is and nevertheless not to depart from the cross of Christ, than to see it with the mind and to despise the cross of Christ. Beyond this it is good, indeed best, if it can be done, that a person both sees where he must go and holds fast the means by which he is to be conveyed.

(2) They were able to do this, the mighty minds of the mountains; they have been called mountains whom the light of justice especially illumines.<sup>9</sup> They were able; and they saw that which he is. For John saw and said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."<sup>10</sup> They saw this; and that they might reach that which they saw from afar, they did not depart from the cross of Christ and they did not despise Christ's lowliness. The little ones, I assure you, who cannot understand this, yet depart not from the cross and passion and resurrection of Christ, are guided to that which they do not see in the very same ship in which those who do see also arrive.

4. But truly there have been some philosophers of this world<sup>11</sup> and they have sought the creator through creation. For he can be found through creation as the Apostle clearly states: "For the invisible things of him are clearly seen from the attributes of the world, being understood by the things that are made. His eternal power also and divinity, so that they are inexcusable." And he continues, "Because that when they knew God"—he did not say, because that they did not know, but "Because that when they knew God, they have not glorified him as God or given thanks, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened." Darkened in what way? He continues and says more openly, "For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."<sup>12</sup> They saw where they had to come; but, ungrateful to him who granted

9. Cf. *Tractate* 1.2 ff.

10. Jn 1.1.

11. The Neo-Platonic philosophers are meant. For a good brief treatment of their influence on Augustine's thought see Gilson, 197–209, and Portalié, 95–104. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI* 850–852, gives an excellent account of how the Neo-Platonists came so close to the Christian concept of God and yet fell short of the ultimate truth through their humanistic pride.

12. Rom 1.20–22.

to them what they saw, they wanted to attribute to themselves what they saw. And having become proud, they lost what they saw and were turned from it to idols and images and to the cults of the demons to adore creation and to despise the creator.

(2) But these [philosophers] were already crushed and they did these things; however they became proud that they might be crushed. However in their pride they said that they were wise. These, then, about whom [the Apostle] said, "Who when they knew God," saw what John is saying, that all things were made through the Word of God. For these ideas are also found in the books of the philosophers, and also that God has an only begotten Son through whom all things exist.

(3) They could see that which is, but they saw from afar. They did not wish to hold fast to the lowliness of Christ, a ship in which they might arrive safely at that which they could see from afar. And in their eyes the cross of Christ seemed sordid. A sea must be crossed, and do you despise the wood? Oh! Proud wisdom! You ridicule the crucified Christ, and he is the very one whom you have seen from afar. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God."<sup>13</sup> But why was he crucified? Because the wood of his lowliness was necessary for you. For you had swollen with pride and had been cast forth far from that homeland; and the way has been washed out by the waves of this world, and there is no way by which you can cross over to the homeland unless you are carried by the wood. Ungrateful man, do you ridicule him who has come to you that you may return? He himself became the way, and this through the sea. For this reason he walked on the sea<sup>14</sup> that he might show that there is a way on the sea. But you, who cannot in any way yourself walk on the sea, be carried by the ship, be carried by the wood!

(4) Believe in the crucified one, and you will be able to arrive. For your sake he was crucified, that he might teach humility and because if he were to come as God, he would not be

13. Cf. Jn 1.1.

14. Cf. Mt 14.22-23; Mk 6.45-51; Jn 6.16-21.

recognized. For if he were to come as God, he would not come to those who could not see God. For he neither comes nor departs according to that which God is, since he is present everywhere and is confined by no place. But according to what did he come? According to that which appeared as man.

5. Because, then, he was man in such a way that God lay hidden in him, there was sent before him a great man through whose witness he might be found to be more than man. And who is this? "There was a man." And how could this man speak the truth about God? "Sent from God." What was he called? "Whose name was John." Why did he come? "This man came for a witness, to give witness concerning the light, that all might believe through him." What kind of man was this who was to give witness concerning the light? Something great was this John, immense merit, great grace, great eminence! Admire him! Yes, certainly, admire him, but as a mountain. For a mountain is in darkness unless it is clothed in light. Therefore, admire John, but only to the extent that you hear what follows: "He was not himself the light." Lest when you take the mountain to be light, you suffer shipwreck on the mountain and do not find consolation.<sup>15</sup>

(2) But what should you admire? The mountain as a mountain. But raise yourself up to him who gives light to the mountain which was itself raised up for this purpose, that it might first receive the rays and report them to your eyes. Thus "he was not himself the light."

6. Why then did he come? "To give witness concerning the light." Why this? "That all might believe through him." And to what light was he to give witness. "It was the true light." Why has "true" been added? Because an enlightened man is also called a light; but the true light is that which enlightens. For example, our eyes are also called lights;<sup>16</sup> and yet, unless a lamp be lit during the night or the sun come out during the day, these lights are open for no good reason. So then John, too, was a light, but not the true light, because, not enlight-

15. Cf. *Tractate* 1.3.

16. The connotation "eye" for "light" is very common in Latin and less frequent in Greek. It has no English equivalent.

ened, [he was] darkness, but by enlightenment he became a light.

(2) Indeed, if he were not enlightened, he was darkness, like all the irreligious people, to whom, once they believed, the Apostle said, "You were once darkness."<sup>17</sup> Now, however, since they had believed, what did he say? "But now, however, light in the Lord." If he did not add "in the Lord," we would not understand. "Light in the Lord," he said; you were darkness but not in the Lord. "For you were once darkness." There he did not add, in the Lord. Therefore darkness in yourselves, "light in the Lord." So, too, "that man was not the light, but to give witness concerning the light."

7. But where is the light itself? "It was the true light which enlightens every man who comes into this world."<sup>18</sup> If every man who comes, then John too. He himself, then, enlightened him by whom he wished himself to be pointed out. My beloved people, exercise your understanding; for he came to weak minds, to wounded hearts, to the vision of bleary-eyed souls. He had come for this reason.

(2) And how could the soul see what exists in perfection? In the very same way as often the sun, which we cannot see with our eyes, is known to have arisen through some irradiated body. For even those who have injured eyes are able to see a wall which has been clearly and brightly lighted up by the sun; or they are able to see a mountain or a tree or anything of the sort. And through that irradiated object the rising of the sun is shown to them even though they still have insufficient sharpness of eye to see it. So, then, all those to whom Christ had come were less able to see him; he shed his rays upon John; and through him who proclaimed that he was irradiated and enlightened, and not the one who irradiated or enlightened, he who enlightens was known, he who fills was known. And who is he? "He who enlightens every man who comes into the world," he says.

(3) For if man had not departed from that light, he would

17. Eph 5.8.

18. Cf. *Tractate* 1.18, note 42.

not have to be enlightened; but he must be enlightened here precisely because he departed from that light whereby mankind could always have been enlightened.

8. What then? If he came here, where was he? "He was in this world." He both was here and he came here. He was here by his divinity; he came here by his flesh because when he came here by his divinity, he could not be seen by the stupid and the blind and the unjust. The unjust themselves are the darkness about which it has been said, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."<sup>19</sup>

(2) Look, he is here even now, and he was here, and he is always here; and he never departs, he departs nowhere. It is essential that you have a vantage point from which to see that he never departs from you. It is essential that you do not depart from him who retreats nowhere. It is essential that you not desert, and you will not be deserted. Do not fall and the sun will not set for you.<sup>20</sup> If you have caused your fall, he causes his setting for you; but if you stand upright, he is present to you.

(3) But you have not stood upright: recall from where you have fallen, from where he who fell before you cast you down. For he cast you down not by force, not by compulsion, but by your own will. For if you did not consent to evil, you would stand upright, you would remain enlightened. Now, however, because you have already fallen from where that light can be seen, and have been wounded in your heart, there has come to you such a one as you might be able to see; and he has shown himself as man in such a way that he sought witness from man. From man God seeks witness, and God has man as witness. God has man as witness, but for man's sake—so weak are we!

(4) We seek the day with a lamp! For John himself was called

19. Jn 1.5.

20. The Latin metaphor contains a play on words that is untranslatable; Latin *cadere*, "to fall," and *occidere*, "to fall down," or, for heavenly bodies, "to set," and the derivative nouns, *casus* and *occasus*. The enlightening God never stops shining on men; but a person's sin blocks out that light and, so to speak, God the sun sets on that person who then is darkness and not light.

a lamp when the Lord said, "He was a burning and a shining lamp; and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater testimony than that of John."<sup>21</sup>

9. Thus he showed that it was for the sake of men that he wanted himself to be clearly revealed to the faith of the believers by his lamp, so that his enemies might be confounded by the same lamp. For they were his enemies who tempted him and said, "Tell us, by what authority do you do these things?" He said, 'I also will ask you one word. Tell me, the baptism of John, from where is it? From heaven, or from men?' And they were disturbed and said among themselves, 'If we shall say from heaven, he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?"' (For that man had given witness to Christ and had said, "I am not the Christ, but he is.")<sup>22</sup> "But if we shall say, from men, we fear the people lest they stone us, for they held John as a prophet."<sup>23</sup> Fearing a stoning, but fearing more an admission of the truth, they answered the truth with a lie: "and iniquity has lied to itself."<sup>24</sup> For they said, "We know not."

(2) And, because they had shut themselves up against him, by asserting that they did not know what they knew, the Lord did not open up to them because they did not knock. For it has been said, "Knock and it will be opened to you."<sup>25</sup> But they not only had not knocked that it might be opened, but by their denial they barricaded the door itself against themselves. And the Lord said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."<sup>26</sup> And they were confounded through John, and in them was fulfilled the prophecy, "I have prepared a lamp for my Christ; his enemies I will clothe with confusion."<sup>27</sup>

10. "He was in the world, and the world was made through him." Do not imagine that he was in the world in such a way as the earth is in the world, the sky is in the world, the sun, the

21. Cf. Jn 5.35-36.

22. Cf. Jn 1.20 and 27.

23. Cf. Mt 21.23-27; Mk 11.28-33; Lk 20.2-8.

24. Cf. Ps 26.12.

25. Cf. Mt 7.7.

26. Cf. Mt 21.27; Mk 11.29; Lk 20.8.

27. Cf. Ps 131.17-18.

moon, and the stars are in the world, trees, cattle, and men are in the world. He was not in the world in such a way. But how was he? As the master builder who governs what he has made. For he did not make it in the way a craftsman makes a chest. The chest which he makes is external to him; and when it is constructed, it has been situated in another place. And however nearby he is, he who is constructing it sits in another place and is external to that which he is constructing.

(2) But God constructs while infused in the world. He constructs while situated everywhere. He does not withdraw from anywhere; he does not direct the structure which he constructs as someone on the outside. By the presence of his majesty he makes what he makes; by his own presence he governs what he has made. He was, then, in the world as the one through whom the world was made. For "the world was made through him, and the world knew him not."

11. What does it mean, "The world was made through him"? The sky, the earth, the sea, and all the things which are in them, are called the world. The second time in another sense the lovers of the world are called the world.

(2) "The world was made through him, and the world knew him not." Did the skies not know their creator? Or did the angels not know their creator, or did the stars not know their creator whom the demons acknowledge? All things everywhere bore witness. But who did not know? Those who are called the world from their love of the world. For in the act of loving we dwell with our heart. But because of their loving they deserved to be called the same [name] as that [place] where they were dwelling. As we say "that house is bad" or "that house is good." We do not blame the walls in that house which we call bad, nor do we praise the walls in that which we call good. Rather by a bad house, [we mean] bad inhabitants, and by a good house, good inhabitants. So, too, [we call those] the world who live in the world by loving it. Who are they? Those who love the world; for they live in the world with their heart. For those who do not love the world abide in the world in the flesh; but in their heart they dwell in heaven, as the

Apostle says, "But our conversation is in heaven."<sup>28</sup> Therefore, "the world was made through him, and the world knew him not."

12. "He came unto his own"—because all those things were made through him—"and his own"<sup>29</sup> received him not." Who are they? Human beings whom he made. The Jews whom he esteemed at first to be above all nations; for the other nations adored idols and served demons, but that people had been born of the seed of Abraham and were themselves especially his own since they were related to him through the flesh which he deigned to assume. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Did they receive him not at all? Did no one receive him? Was no one therefore saved? For no one will be saved except him who shall have received Christ when he comes.

13. But the gospel added, "But as many as received him." What did he offer them? Great favor! Great mercy! He was born the only one and he did not want to remain the only one. Many men in advanced age, when they have not had sons, adopt them and by will they do what they could not by nature. Men do this. But if someone should have an only son, he rejoices the more in him because he alone will possess everything and will have no one who would divide the inheritance with him, so that he may be left poorer. With God it is not so. Into this world he sent the same only Son whom he had begotten and through whom he had created all things in order that he might not be the only one but might have adopted brothers.

(2) For we were not born from God as was that only begotten, but were adopted through his<sup>30</sup> grace. For that only begotten came to loose our sins, sins with which we were en-

28. Cf. Phil 3.20. A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs chrétiens* (Turnhout, 1954), 219, suggests "our city" or "our life" for Douay's "our conversation."

29. "His own" is first *sui propria*, the neuter plural, and then *sui*, the masculine plural.

30. The Latin text reads *per gratiam ipsius*. *Ipsius*, "his," is rather ambiguous; it could refer to God or, in light of the next sentence, to the only begotten.

tangled so that he could not adopt us on account of their impediment. He himself loosed those whom he wanted to make his brothers and he made them coheirs. For so says the Apostle, "but if a son, an heir also through God."<sup>31</sup> And again, "heirs indeed of God but coheirs of Christ."<sup>32</sup> He was not afraid to have coheirs; for his inheritance does not become meager if many shall possess it. In fact, when he possesses, they themselves become his inheritance and he in turn becomes their inheritance.

(3) Hear how they become his inheritance: "The Lord has said to me, 'You are my son; this day have I begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance.'"<sup>33</sup> And he, how does he become their inheritance? In the Psalm it says, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup."<sup>34</sup> Let us possess him and let him possess us. Let him possess us, as the Lord; let us possess him as salvation; let us possess him as light.

(4) What, then, did he give to those who received him? "He gave power to be made the sons of God to these who believe in his name," so that they may hold onto the wood and cross the sea.

14. And how are they born? They are born, of course, because they become sons of God and brothers of Christ. For if they are not born, how can they become sons? But sons of men are born of flesh and blood, of the will of man, and of the embrace of wedlock. But they, how are they born to him "Who are not of bloods," as if of male and female?

(2) "Bloods" is not Latin, but because in Greek it is put into the plural, the translator preferred to put it so and, as it were, to use improper Latin according to the grammarians, but nonetheless to set forth the truth according to the ability of weak men to hear. For if he were to say "blood" in the singular number, he would not express what he intended; for men are born of the bloods of male and female. Let us say it, then,

31. Gal 4.7.

32. Rom 8.17.

33. Cf. Ps 2.7-8. Douay has "gentiles" rather than "nations."

34. Cf. Ps 15.5.

and not fear the rods<sup>35</sup> of the grammar teachers, provided, nevertheless, that we reach a solid and more certain truth. He who understands<sup>36</sup> finds fault, ungrateful because he has understood.

(3) "Not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." He put "flesh" for "female" because, when she had been made from his rib, Adam said, "This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,"<sup>37</sup> and the Apostle says, "he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own flesh."<sup>38</sup> Therefore "flesh" is put for "wife," just as also sometimes "spirit" is put for "husband."<sup>39</sup> Why? Because the latter governs, the former is governed; the latter ought to rule, the former to serve. For when the flesh commands and the spirit serves, the house is awry. What is worse than a house where the woman has absolute authority over the man? But upright is the house where the man commands, the woman obeys. Upright, therefore, is mankind itself when the spirit commands, the flesh serves.

15. These, then, "were born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." But that men might be born of God, God was first born from among them. For Christ is God, and Christ was born from among men. Indeed, he sought on earth only a mother since he already had a father in heaven. He was born of God, that we might be made through him; and he was born of a woman, that we might be remade through

35. The Roman *magister* and the *grammaticus* often inflicted corporal punishment upon remiss students; the *plagosus Orbilius* who taught Horace (*Ep.* 2.1.70) is the most famous example. See also Quintilian, 1.3.16–17. Augustine had firsthand experience with such teachers; see *Confessions* 1.14.23.18 and 19.30.21 (CCL 27.13 and 17).

36. The CCL text has the future, "will understand." The Migne text, PL 35.1395, which duplicates the famous Maurist text, has the present tense as I have translated. Since CCL offers no alternative reading and there are frequent misprints in the CCL edition, I have chosen to keep the present tense here.

37. Cf. Gn 2.23.

38. Cf. Eph 5.28–29.

39. See, e.g., *Tractate* 15.19: "... you are thinking about the flesh . . . I am speaking to the spirit. Your understanding is absent. 'Call your husband.'" (Jn 4.16.)

him.<sup>40</sup> Do not wonder, then, O man, that you are made a son through grace, that you are born of God according to his Word. The Word himself wished first to be born of man, that you might be born safely of God, and that you might say to yourself, "It was not without reason that God willed to be born of man, but because he thought me of some importance, so that he should make me immortal and should himself be born into mortal life for me."

(2) So when [the gospel] had said, "of God were born," in order that, as it were, we might not be astonished and terrified at a grace so great that it might seem unbelievable to us that men were born of God, as if relieving you of anxiety, [the gospel] says, "and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Why then are you astonished that men are born of God? Notice that God himself was born of men: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

16. Indeed, because "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," by the nativity itself he made a salve by which the eyes of our heart may be wiped clean and we may be able to see his majesty through his lowliness.<sup>41</sup> Thus "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He healed our eyes. And what follows? "And we saw his glory."

(2) His glory no one could see unless he were healed by the lowliness of his flesh. Why could we not see? Concentrate, my beloved people, and see what I am saying. Dust, so to speak, had forcibly entered man's eye; earth had entered it, had injured the eye, and it could not see the light. That injured eye is anointed; it was injured by earth, and earth is put there that it may be healed. For all salves and medicines are nothing but [compounds] of earth. You have been blinded by dust, you are healed by dust; thus the flesh had blinded you, flesh heals you. For the soul had become carnal by assenting to carnal passions; from that the eye of the heart had been blinded. "The Word was made flesh." That physician<sup>42</sup> made a salve for

40. Cf. *Tractate* 1.12.

41. Many codices read *per eius humanitatem*, "through his humanity."

42. This title of Christ was widely used among the Fathers, particularly in Africa, and is a favorite of Augustine. See the fine note in Berrouard, *Homé-*

you. And because he came in such a way that by his flesh he might extinguish the faults of the flesh and by his death he might kill death, it was therefore effected in you that, because "the Word was made flesh," you could say, "And we saw his glory." What sort of glory? Such as he became as the Son of Man? That was his lowliness, not his glory. But where has man's eyesight, healed through flesh, been guided? "We saw," it says, "his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

(3) We shall discuss grace and truth more fully in another passage in the same gospel, if the Lord will deign to grant it. Now let these words suffice; grow strong in Christ, be strengthened in the faith, and be watchful in good works. Do not depart from the wood by which you can cross the sea.

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*lies I-XVI*, 854-855, and the thorough study of the title in R. Arbesmann, "The Concept of 'Christus Medicus' in St. Augustine," *Traditio* 10 (1954) 1-28. Christ as healer is a particularly important concept for Augustine in these *Tractates* to provide a thorough understanding of the meaning of the Incarnation in the life of man. See R. Hardy, 112-116. See also, Poque, *Language*, 1.176-177, 186-187.

### TRACTATE 3

*On John 1.15–18*

**W**E HAVE UNDERTAKEN in the Lord's name and we have promised you,<sup>1</sup> beloved people, to discuss the grace and truth of God, filled with which the only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, appeared to his saints. [We shall also indicate that this subject] must be considered apart from the Old Testament since it is a matter proper to the New Testament. Pay attention, therefore, and concentrate, both that God may grant as much as I can grasp and that you may hear as much as you can grasp.

(2) For it will be left [to you] that, if the birds do not take away the seed which is scattered in your hearts,<sup>2</sup> and the thorns do not choke it, and the heat does not scorch it, and if it is tended by the rain of daily exhortations and your good thoughts so that the same thing happens in your heart which happens in a field by the use of hoes, namely that the clod is broken and the seed is covered and enabled to sprout, you may bring forth the sort of fruit in which the farmer rejoices and delights.

(3) But, if in return for good seed and for good rain, we bring forth not fruit but thorns, neither will the seed stand accused nor will the rain be at fault; but for the thorns the fire that they deserve is being readied.

2. We are Christian men, and I do not think, beloved people, that I need to try for very long to persuade you of this. And if

1. At the end of *Tractate* 2 and in *En in Ps* 123. As Le Landais, 22–23, has clearly shown, *En in Ps* 122 and 123 intervened between *Tractates* 2 and 3; hence the interval between the two sermons makes this a more appropriate remark.

2. Cf. Mt 13.3–23.

Christians, then necessarily, by the very name, men belonging to Christ. We should carry his sign upon our foreheads; and we do not blush about this if we also carry it in our hearts. His sign is his lowliness. It was through a star that the Magi knew him,<sup>3</sup> and this sign was given from the Lord, a heavenly and bright sign; but he did not wish the star to be his sign on the foreheads of the faithful, rather his cross.<sup>4</sup> He was glorified by that by which he was made low; he raised up the lowly by that to which, when he was made low, he descended. We belong therefore to the gospel, we belong to the New Testament.

(2) "The Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." We question the Apostle and he says to us that we are not under the Law, but under grace.<sup>5</sup> Therefore "He sent his son, made of a woman, made under the Law, that he might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."<sup>6</sup> See, this is why Christ came: that he might redeem those who were under the Law, and that we may no longer be under the Law, but under grace.

(3) Who then gave the Law? He gave the Law who also gave grace.<sup>7</sup> But he sent the Law through a servant; he himself descended with grace.

(4) And how had men been made under the Law? By not fulfilling the Law. For he who fulfills the Law is not under the Law but with the Law. He who is under the Law, however, is not lifted up, but pressed down by the Law. And thus the Law makes all men who have been placed under the Law guilty.

3. Cf. Mt 2.2.

4. H. Rondet, "La croix sur le front," RSR 42 (1954) 388-394, makes a strong case that among the North African Christians, if not elsewhere, at least some persons wore a visible cross, perhaps painted or tattooed, on their foreheads as a sign of their Christianity. There are several other places in these *Tractates* where "the sign of the cross" seems to have this meaning: *Tractates* 11.3 and 4, 36.4, 43.9, 50.2, 53.13, 55.1, and 117.3. See also Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 210-211.

5. Cf. Rom 6.14.

6. Cf. Gal 4.4-5.

7. This is likely directed at the Manichaeans who held that the Old Testament was the revelation not of the true God but of Satan. See Decret, 123-124.

And it is over their head for the purpose of showing their sins, not taking them away. The Law, then, orders; the giver of the Law takes pity in that which the Law orders. Men, attempting by their own strength to fulfill what was commanded by the Law, fell by their rash and headlong presumption. They are not with the Law but have become guilty under the Law. And because they were unable to fulfill the Law by their own strength, having become guilty under the Law, they implored the help of a liberator. And culpability under the Law made the proud sick. The sickness of the proud became the confession of the humble. Now the sick confess that they are sick. Let the physician come and heal the sick.

3. The physician. Who? Our Lord Jesus Christ. Who [is] our Lord Jesus Christ? He who was seen even by those by whom he was crucified. He who was seized, beaten with fists, whipped, besmeared with spittle, crowned with thorns, hung upon a cross, deprived of life, wounded by a spear, taken down from the cross, interred in a tomb. That same one [is] our Lord Jesus Christ. He is manifestly the same one, and he is the complete physician of our wounds, that crucified one against whom insult was hurled, at whom, when he was hanging, his persecutors shook their heads and said, "If he is the Son of God, let him come down from the cross."<sup>8</sup> He is our complete physician, he, manifestly.

(2) Well then, why didn't he show his insulters that he was the Son of God, so that, if he allowed himself to be raised up on the cross, at least then, when they said, "If he is the Son of God, let him come down from the cross," he would come down and show them that he was truly the Son of God whom they had dared to mock? He did not want to. Why didn't he? Was it because he could not? Obviously he could. For what is greater, to come down from a cross or to rise up from the tomb?

(3) But he endured the insulters; for the cross was taken up not as a demonstration of power but as an example of suffering. There he cured your wounds where so long he endured his own; there he healed you of eternal death where he

8. Cf. Mt 27.40.

deigned to die a temporal death. And did he die, or was it that death died in him?" What kind of death [was] it that killed death?

4. And yet is it our Lord Jesus Christ, himself, the whole of him, who was seen and held and crucified? This isn't his whole self, is it? He himself it certainly is, but the whole is not that which the Jews saw. This is not the whole Christ. And what is? "In the beginning was the Word." In what beginning? "And the Word was with God." And what sort of Word? "And the Word was God."<sup>10</sup> Was this Word perchance made by God? No. For, "He was in the beginning with God." What then? Are the other things which God made not like the Word? No, because "all things were made through him, and without him was made nothing."<sup>11</sup> How were all things made through him? Because "what was made, in him was life,"<sup>12</sup> and before it was made, there was life. What was made is not life; but in his creative knowledge,<sup>13</sup> that is, in the wisdom of God, before it was made, there was life. What was made passed away; what is in wisdom cannot pass away. What was made, therefore, was life in him. And what sort of life? For the soul, too, is the life of the body; our body has its own life, and when it has lost it, there is the death of the body.

(2) Was that life, then, of this sort? No, but "the life was the light of men."<sup>14</sup> Was it the light of cattle? For this light is the light of both men and cattle. There is a certain light of men. Let us see how men differ from cattle, and then we shall understand what the light of men is. You do not differ from an animal, except in intellect; don't boast about anything else. Do you have confidence in your strength? You are surpassed by wild animals. Do you have confidence in your speed? You are surpassed by flies. Do you have confidence in your beauty? How great beauty is there in the feathers of the peacock? How then are you better? From the image of God! Where is the image of God? In the mind, in the intellect.

(3) If therefore you are better than an animal precisely be-

9. Cf. Hos 13.14.

11. Cf. Jn 1.3.

13. Cf. *Tractate* 1.17 and note 40.

10. Jn 1.1.

12. Cf. Jn 1.3-4.

14. Cf. Jn 1.4.

cause you have a mind with which you may understand what the animal cannot understand, and, in fact, therein a man because you are better than a cow, the light of men is the light of minds. The light of minds is above minds and transcends all minds. This was that life through which all things were made.

5. Where was it? It was here.<sup>15</sup> Or was it with the Father and not here? Or (what is truer) was it both with the Father and here? If, then, it was here, why was it not seen? Because "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."<sup>16</sup> Oh men, don't be darkness, don't be unbelievers, unjust, wicked, grasping, greedy, lovers of the world; for these are the darkness. The light is not absent, but you are absent from the light. A blind man in the sun has the sun present, but he is himself absent from the sun.<sup>17</sup> Do not, then, be darkness.

(2) For perhaps this is the grace about which I am going to speak, that we may no longer be darkness and the Apostle may say to us, "For you were once darkness, but now light in the Lord."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, because the light of men, that is, the light of minds, was not seen, there was need that a man give witness about the light, not indeed a man of darkness, but one already enlightened. Yet he himself, because he was enlightened, was not the light, but "to give witness concerning the light." For "he was not himself the light."

(3) And what was the light? "It was the true light which enlightens every man who comes into this world." And where was this [light]? "He was in the world." And how "was he in the world"? Is this light also in the world in the same way as this light of the sun, of the moon, of lamps? No, for "the world was made through him, and the world knew him not."<sup>19</sup> That is, "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness grasped it not."

(4) For the world is darkness because the lovers<sup>20</sup> of the

15. Some editors take this to be a question: "Was it here?"

16. Cf. Jn 1.5.

17. Cf. *Tractate* 1.19.

18. Cf. Eph 5.8.

19. Cf. Jn 1.7-10.

20. The translation of the various words for "love," *amor*, *dilectio*, and *caritas*, and their cognates, presents a difficult problem since the English lan-

world [are] the world.<sup>21</sup> For has not creation acknowledged its creator? The firmament gave witness from a star.<sup>22</sup> The sea gave witness; it carried the Lord when he walked.<sup>23</sup> The winds gave witness; they quieted at his command.<sup>24</sup> The earth gave witness; it trembled when he was crucified.<sup>25</sup> If all these gave witness, how did the world know him not, except that the world is the lovers of the world, those who dwell in the world with their heart? And the world is wicked because the inhabitants of the world are wicked, just as a house is wicked, not its walls, but its inhabitants.

6. "He came unto his own," that is, he came to those things which belong to him.<sup>26</sup> "And his own received him not." What hope is there then, except that "as many as received him he gave them power to be made the sons of God"? If they are made sons, they are born. If they are born, how are they born? Not of flesh, "not of bloods,"<sup>27</sup> nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but they were born of God."<sup>28</sup> Let them rejoice then, that they were born of God. Let them have confidence that they belong to God. Let them receive proof that they were born of God.

(2) "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."<sup>29</sup> If the Word was not ashamed to be born of man, are men ashamed to be born of God? Now because he did this, he

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guage is less precise in designating different aspects of love. In *De Civitate Dei* 14.7, Augustine clearly indicates that in their use in scripture the Latin words, *amor*, *dilectio*, and *caritas* are synonyms, having both ameliorative and pejorative (from a Christian point of view) connotations, although he does not discuss *caritas* except to identify it with *dilectio*. See CCL 48.421-423; and FOTC 14.359-361. Even in secular Latin *amor* may carry a neutral or non-sexual connotation. Throughout the translation I shall translate all the words as simply "love"; any deviations will be footnoted. Here I follow the procedure set down by D. Mosher, *Saint Augustine Eighty-Three Questions*, FOTC 70.66-67, note 6 to Question 35. This identification of the three Latin words is supported by Gilson, 311-312; see also Agaësse, 31-36.

21. Cf. *Tractate* 2.11.

22. Cf. Mt 2.2-10.

23. Cf. Mt 14.25-26.

24. Cf. Mt 8.26-27.

25. Cf. Mt 27.51 (NAB, 27.52).

26. The distinction lies in the Latin words. The text quoted reads *in propria venit*; Augustine explains *propria* as *sua*. See *Tractate* 2.12, note 29.

27. Cf. *Tractate* 2.14.

28. Cf. Jn 1.11-13.

29. Cf. Jn 1.14.

cured [us]; because he cured [us], we see. For this, namely that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” became a medicine for us, so that since we were blinded by earth, we might be healed by earth.<sup>30</sup>

(3) And once healed, what might we see? “And we saw,” it says, “his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”<sup>31</sup>

7. “John bears witness concerning him, and cries out saying, ‘This was he of whom I said, “He who comes after me, was made before me.”’” He came after me, and he preceded me. What does it mean, “He was made before me?” He preceded me; not he was made before I was made, but, he was placed before me, that is, “He was made before me.” Why was he made before you although he came after you? “Because he was before me.” Before you, O John? What great thing [is it] if [he is] before you? It is good that you bear witness to him; let us hear him speaking himself: “And before Abraham, I am.”<sup>32</sup> But Abraham, too, was born in the middle of the human race; [there were] many before him, many after him.

(2) Hear the words of the Father to the Son: “Before the daystar, I begot you.”<sup>33</sup> He who was begotten before the daystar himself enlightens all. For a certain one who fell was called Lucifer;<sup>34</sup> he was an angel and became a devil, and Scripture said about him, “Lucifer who used to rise in the

30. Cf. *Tractate* 2.16.

31. Cf. Jn 1.14. The reader should observe that in *Tractate* 2.16 Augustine's text has *gloriam quasi*, “the glory as it were,” but here *gloriam tanquam* which I have translated “the glory as” to suggest the difference in wording.

32. Cf. Jn 8.58.

33. Cf. Ps 109.3.

34. *Lucifer* is the Latin word for “daystar.” The Fathers, as early as the third century A.D., saw in the words of Jesus in Lk 10.18, “I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven,” an allusion to Is 14.12 which is quoted in this sentence in our text, even though the daystar there is a symbol of the King of Babylon and in 2 Pt 1.19 and Rv 22.16 Christ himself is the daystar. A good brief, but thorough, account of this name Lucifer for Satan is given by D. Petau, “De Angelis” 3.3.3–4, *Dogmata Theologica*, 9th ed. (Paris, 1866) 4.76–77. Augustine was aware that the daystar in Is 14.12 was the King of Babylon, but he saw the king himself as a figure of the devil; see *De Civitate Dei* 11.15 (CCL 48.335) and *DDC* 3.27 (PL 34.88; and CCL 32.99).

morning fell.”<sup>35</sup> Why [is he called] Lucifer? Because, by being illuminated, he gave light. But why did he become darkened? Because “he stood not in the truth.”<sup>36</sup>

(3) Therefore he was before the daystar, before every illuminated being; for he, by whom all who can be illuminated are illuminated, must necessarily be before everyone who has been illuminated.

8. Therefore this follows: “And of his fullness we have all received.” What have you received? “And grace for grace.” For so go the words of the gospel, as compared with Greek copies. It does not say, and of his fullness we have all received, grace for grace. But it says as follows: “And of his fullness we have all received, and grace for grace,” that is, we have received in such a way that he wanted us to understand that of his fullness we have received something, and, in addition, grace for grace. For we have received of his fullness, first grace; and again we have received grace, grace for grace.

(2) What grace did we receive first? Faith. Walking in faith, we walk in grace. For how have we merited this? By what previous merits of ours? Let no one pat himself on the back. Let him go back to his conscience, seek out the deepest recess of his thoughts, go back over the course of his actions. Let him not consider what he is if he is now something, but what he was, that he might be something. He will find that he was worthy of nought but punishment. Therefore, if you were worthy of punishment, and there came that one who would not punish sins but would forgive sins, grace was given to you, recompense was not paid.

(3) Why is it called grace? Because it is given gratuitously.<sup>37</sup> For you did not buy with previous merits what you received. Thus the sinner received this first grace, that his sins were forgiven. What did he merit? Let him ask justice; he finds punishment. Let him ask mercy; he finds grace. But this, too, God

35. Cf. Is 14.12.

36. Cf. Jn 8.44.

37. Augustine seemingly traces the etymology of *gratia*, “grace,” to *gratis*, “freely,” “without recompense”; this is erroneous as *gratis* is an ablative adverb from *gratia*.

had promised through the Prophets; and so when he came to give what he had promised, he gave not only grace but also truth. How was truth exhibited? Because what was promised was done.

9. What then is "grace for grace"? By faith we first win God's favor; and we who were not worthy to have our sins forgiven, from the very fact that, though unworthy, we received so great a gift, it is called grace. What is grace? That which is given gratuitously. What is "given gratuitously"? That which is bestowed, not paid back. If it was owed, recompense was paid, not grace bestowed; but if it was in truth owed, you were a good man. If, however, as is true, you were evil but you believed in him who justifies the ungodly<sup>38</sup> (What is "who justifies the ungodly"? He makes a godly man out of an ungodly one), consider what was bound to threaten you through the Law and what you acquired through grace.

(2) But having acquired this grace of faith, you will be just by faith. "For the just man lives by faith."<sup>39</sup> And you will first win God's favor from living by faith. When you have won God's favor from living by faith, you will receive as a reward immortality and eternal life. And that is grace. Now for what merit do you receive eternal life? For grace. For if faith is grace, and if eternal life is, as it were, a recompense for faith, God, indeed, seems to pay back eternal life as if it were owed (Owed to whom? To the man of faith because he won it by faith), but because faith itself is grace, and eternal life is a grace for grace.

10. Hear Paul the Apostle acknowledging grace, and afterwards seeking what was owed. What is the acknowledgment of grace in Paul? "Who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and contumelious," he says, "but I obtained mercy."<sup>40</sup> He said that he was unworthy to obtain it, but that he obtained it not by his own merits, but by the mercy of God. Hear him now demanding what is owed, he who had first accepted

38. Cf. Rom 4:5.

40. Cf. 1 Tm 1:13.

39. Cf. Rom 1:17, citing Hab 2:4.

unowed grace. He says, "For I am even now ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice."<sup>41</sup> Now he demands what is owed, now he exacts what is owed. For look at the following words: "Which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me in that day."<sup>42</sup> Before, that he might receive grace, he needed a merciful father; that [he might receive] the reward of grace, a just judge. Will he who did not condemn the ungodly condemn the faithful? And yet if you think about it correctly, he himself first gave faith by which you have won him; for you did not on your own resources win that something might be owed you. Therefore, inasmuch as he afterwards bestows the reward of immortality, he crowns his own gifts, not your merits.

(2) Therefore, my brothers, "of his fullness we have all received." Of the fullness of his mercy, of the abundance of his goodness we have received. What? The remission of our sins that we might be justified by faith. And, in addition, what? "And grace for grace," that is, for this grace in which we live by faith we are going to receive another. And yet what else except grace? For if I say that this, too, is owed, I consign something to myself as if to one to whom it were owed. But God crowns the gifts of his mercy in us, but only if we should walk with perseverance in that grace which we first received.

11. "For the Law was given through Moses," which held them guilty. For what does the Apostle say? "The Law entered in, that sin might abound."<sup>43</sup> This benefitted the proud, that sin abounded; for they gave much to themselves, and, as it were, consigned much to their own strength. And they were unable to fulfill justice unless he who had ordered it were to help them. God, wishing to tame their pride, gave the Law, as if saying, Look, fulfill.

(2) Don't suppose there is no one to order. He who is to order is not missing; rather, he who should fulfill is missing.

41. 2 Tm 4.6-8.

42. Cf. 2 Tm 4.8.

43. Cf. Rom 5.20.

12. If, then, he who would fulfill is missing, how does he not fulfill? Because he has been born with the transmission of sin and death.<sup>44</sup> Born of Adam, he came bringing with him what was conceived there. The first man fell; and all who were born of him came bringing from him the concupiscence of the flesh. It was necessary that another man be born who came bringing no concupiscence. A man, and a man; a man for death, and a man for life. So says the Apostle, "For indeed by a man [came] death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead."<sup>45</sup> By what man death and by what man the resurrection of the dead? Don't rush! He continues and says, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."<sup>46</sup> Who belong to Adam? All who have been born of Adam. Who belong to Christ? All who have been born through Christ. Why are all in sin? Because no one has been born apart from Adam.

(2) But that they be born from Adam pertains to necessity; coming from condemnation to be born through Christ pertains to the will and grace. Men are not compelled to be born through Christ. It was not because they willed it that men have been born from Adam; nonetheless all who are from Adam are sinners with sin. All who are through Christ are justified and just, not in themselves but in him. For in themselves, if you should ask, they are born of Adam; in him, if you should ask, they are born of Christ. Why? Because that man, the head, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not with the transmission of sin, though he still came with mortal flesh.

13. Death was the punishment for sins. In the Lord, it was the gift of mercy, not the punishment of sin. For the Lord did

44. The Latin text has *cum traduce*. Although Augustine is not discussing here the origin of the soul itself, the word *tradux* suggests a dispute then ongoing about this question: whether the soul originated from the human souls of the parents by material generation (Traducianism) or from the souls of the parents by a spiritual and creative generation (Generationism) or whether God created each human soul individually (Creationism) or whether the soul preexisted the human body (Preexistentism). Augustine favored the generationist position (*Epistula* 190.4.15, PL 33.861–862; CSEL 57.140–141; and FOTC 30.297–280). See P. Bilaniuk, "Traducianism," NCE 14.230, or "Traducianism," ODCC<sup>2</sup>, 1389.

45. Cf. 1 Cor 15.21.

46. Cf. 1 Cor 15.22.

not have anything because of which he should in justice die. He himself said, "Behold, the prince of this world comes, and in me he finds nothing." Why then do you die? "But that all may know that I do my Father's will, arise, let us go from here."<sup>47</sup> He had nothing because of which he should die, and he died. You have [something] because of which, and do you disdain to die? Deign to suffer according to your merit, with equanimity, what he deigned to suffer, that he might free you from everlasting death.

(2) A man, and a man. But the one, only man; the other, God and man. The one was a man of sin; the other, of justice. You died in Adam; rise again in Christ. For both<sup>48</sup> are due to you. Now you have believed in Christ; still you will pay what you owe from Adam. But the chain of sin will not hold you forever because the temporal death of your Lord has killed your eternal death. This is grace, my brothers; this is truth itself, since it has been promised and delivered.

14. This [grace] was not in the Old Testament because the Law threatened, it did not succour; it ordered, it did not cure; it exposed weakness, it did not take it away. But it made ready for that physician who was to come with grace and truth. Just as a physician first may send his servant to someone whom he wishes to heal that he may find him bound. He was not healthy, he was unwilling to be cured; and that he might not be cured, he kept insisting that he was healthy. The Law was sent; it bound him. He finds himself guilty and now he shouts out from his bonds.

(2) The Lord comes; he cures with rather bitter and sharp medicines. For he says to the sick man, "Bear it." He says, "Endure it." He says, "Do not love the world. Have patience. Let the fire of continence heal you. Let your wounds suffer the sword of persecutions." You were trembling in fear even though bound; he was free, that one, and unbound, he drank what he gave to you. He suffered first that he might comfort you, as if saying, "What you fear to suffer for yourself, I first

47. Cf. Jn 14.30-31.

48. i.e., death and resurrection.

suffer for you." This is grace, and a great grace. Who praises it worthily?

15. I am speaking about Christ's lowliness, my brothers. Who<sup>49</sup> speaks of Christ's majesty and divinity? That by explanation or by speech we might in any way at all speak of Christ's humility, we are not capable; rather, we are quite incapable. We entrust the whole Christ to your thoughts; we do not fully satisfy you who hear us. Ponder the lowliness of Christ. But who, you say, could explain this to us, if you should not describe it? Let him describe it within. He who dwells within describes it better than he who shouts from without.<sup>50</sup> Let him himself show you the grace of his lowliness, he who has begun to dwell in your hearts.<sup>51</sup>

(2) But now if we fail in explaining and propounding his lowliness, who may speak of his majesty? If "the Word made flesh" confounds us, who will explain "in the beginning was the Word"?<sup>52</sup> Hold tight, then, my brothers, this wholeness [of Christ].

16. "The Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Through a servant the Law was given; it made men guilty. Through an emperor pardon was given; it set free the guilty. "The Law was given through Moses." Let the servant not consign to himself anything greater than what was done through him. Chosen for a great ministry as a faithful man in the house, but still a servant,<sup>53</sup> he can act according to the Law; he cannot release from the guilt of the Law. Thus "the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

17. And that no one perchance may say, "And were not grace and truth accomplished through Moses, who saw God?", [the Evangelist] immediately added, "No one has at any time seen God." And how did God become known to

49. The CCL text uniquely reads *quid loquitur*, without a critical note to suggest a reason for the variant reading. I suspect this is a misprint and so have translated the otherwise universally attested reading. The CCL reading is difficult to translate: "How does one speak of . . . (?)."

50. Cf. *Tractate* 1.7.

51. Cf. Eph 3.17.

52. Cf. Jn 1.14 and 1.

53. Cf. Heb 3.5-6 and Nm 12.7.

Moses? Because the Lord revealed [himself] to his servant. What Lord? Christ himself, who sent the Law in advance through a servant, that he himself might come with grace and truth. For "no one has at any time seen God." And from where did he appear to that servant, as far as he was able to comprehend him? But, it says, "The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has himself explained in detail."

(2) What is "in the bosom of the Father"? In the secret of the Father. For God does not have a bosom<sup>54</sup> as we do in our clothes; nor must he be thought of as sitting as we do, or as perhaps wearing a belt so as to have a bosom. But because our bosom is within, the secret of the Father is called the bosom of the Father. And he himself, who knew the Father, in the secret of the Father, has explained in detail. For "no one has at any time seen God."

(3) Therefore he himself came and told what he saw. What did Moses see? Moses saw a cloud, he saw an angel, he saw fire. Everyone of those is a created thing, [each] conveyed an image of its Lord but did not exhibit the presence of the Lord himself. For, indeed, you have it clearly in the Law, "And Moses used to speak with the Lord, face to face, as a friend with his friend."<sup>55</sup> You continue in the same Scripture and you find Moses saying: "If I have found favor in your sight, show yourself openly to me, that I may see you."<sup>56</sup> And it is not enough that he said [this]; he received the answer, "You cannot see my face."<sup>57</sup>

(4) Therefore, my brothers, an angel used to speak with Moses, carrying the image of the Lord; and all those things which happened there through the angel promised this future grace and truth. Those who examine the Law well know this. And when there is an occasion for us to say something

54. Augustine encounters a problem in the various connotations of the Latin word *sinus* which can mean "the bosom" of a person, "the bosom" of a garment, "the fold" of a toga (which created a kind of pocket), or even "the lap."

55. Cf. Ex 33.11.

56. Cf. Ex 33.13. The Latin word for "favor" is *gratia*.

57. Cf. Ex 33.20.

about this, as far as the Lord reveals, we are not silent before you, my beloved people.

18. But know you this, that all the things which were seen physically were not that substance of God. For we see them with the eyes of the flesh. How is the substance of God seen? Ask the gospel. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."<sup>58</sup> There have been men<sup>59</sup> who, deceived by the conceit in their heart, have said, "The Father is invisible, but the Son is visible." How is he visible? If on account of the flesh, because he took flesh, [that] is obvious. For of those who saw the flesh of Christ, some believed, some crucified; and they who believed wavered when he was crucified. And if they had not touched his flesh after the Resurrection, their faith would not have been restored to them. So if the Son is visible because of the flesh, we concede this and it is the Catholic faith; but if [he is visible] before the flesh, as they say, that is, before he became incarnate, they are much out of their minds and much in error. For those corporeally visible phenomena in which an image might be shown came into being through creation; the substance itself was assuredly not exhibited and manifested.

(2) And, beloved people, direct your attention to this easy proof. The wisdom of God cannot be seen by the eyes. Brothers, if Christ is the wisdom of God, and the power of God,<sup>60</sup> if Christ is the Word of God, [and if] the word of man is not seen by the eyes, can the Word of God be so seen?

19. Therefore, drive carnal thought from your hearts that you may truly be under grace, that you may belong to the New Testament. Thus eternal life is promised in the New Testament. Read the Old Testament, and see that the very things which are commanded for us were, indeed, commanded for a people still carnal. For to worship one God is also commanded for us. "You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain"<sup>61</sup> is also commanded for us; for this is the Second Commandment. "Keep the day of the sabbath"<sup>62</sup> is commanded

58. Cf. Mt 5.8.

60. Cf. 1 Cor 1.24.

62. Cf. Ex 20.8.

59. See *Tractate* 1.11, note 27.

61. Cf. Ex 20.7.

even more for us because it is commanded that that be kept spiritually. For the Jews keep the sabbath day in a slave-like spirit, for debauchery and for drunkenness. How better would it be for their women to make wool than to dance on the balconies on that day! Far be it from us, my brothers, to say that they keep the sabbath. A Christian keeps the sabbath spiritually, abstaining from such servile work. For what does "from servile work" mean? From sin. And how do we prove this? Ask the Lord. "Everyone who commits a sin is the slave of sin."<sup>63</sup> Therefore a spiritual observance also of the sabbath is commanded for us.

(2) And likewise all those Commandments are the more commanded for us and must be kept: "You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother. You shall not covet your neighbor's property. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife."<sup>64</sup> Are not all those things commanded for us too? But ask for your reward and you will find it said there: "That your enemies may be driven from your face, and you may receive the land which God promised your fathers."<sup>65</sup>

(3) Because they could not grasp the invisible, they were held by the visible. Why were they held? That they might not perish completely and slip into idolatry. For they did this, my brothers, as it is read, having forgotten such great miracles as God performed before their eyes. The sea was split asunder,<sup>66</sup> a way was made in the middle of the waves, their pursuing enemy was covered over by the same waters which they passed through. And when Moses, a man of God, had withdrawn from their sight, they sought an idol and said, "Make us gods who may go before us, because that man has abandoned us."<sup>67</sup> All their hope had been placed in a man, not in God. Look, a man died. Did God die who had rescued them out of the land of Egypt? And when they had made the image of a calf for themselves, they adored it and said, "These are your gods, O Israel, that have freed you from the land of Egypt."<sup>68</sup> How

63. Cf. Jn 8.34.

65. Cf. Lv 26.1-13.

67. Cf. Ex 32.1.

64. Cf. Ex 20.12-17.

66. Cf. Ex 14.21-31.

68. Cf. Ex 32.4.

quickly they forgot such evident grace! So how could such a people be held except by carnal promises?

20. The same things are ordered there in the decalogue of the Law as [are ordered] also for us; but not the same things are promised as for us. What is promised for us? Eternal life. "Now this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ."<sup>69</sup> Knowledge of God is promised; this is grace for grace. My brothers, now we believe, we do not see; to see what we believe will be recompense for this faith.

(2) The Prophets knew this, but it was hidden before he came. For in the Psalm a certain lover says with a sigh, "One thing I have asked of the Lord; this I shall seek after."<sup>70</sup> And do you ask what he seeks? For perhaps he seeks a land flowing physically with milk and honey, although that must be sought and looked for spiritually; or perhaps he seeks the subjugation of his country's foes, or the death of his own enemies, or the powers and goods of this world. For he burns with love, and sighs much, and seethes with desire, and pants. Let us see what he asks for. "One thing I have asked of the Lord; this shall I seek after." What is it that he seeks after? He says, "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." And suppose that you dwell in the house of the Lord; whence will be your joy there? "That I may gaze," he says, "on the delight of the Lord."<sup>71</sup>

21. My brothers, why do you shout, why do you exult, why do you love, except that a spark of this love is there? What do you desire, I ask you? Can it be seen with the eyes? Can it be touched? Is there some beauty which delights the eyes? Have not the martyrs been loved ardently? And when we commemorate them, do we not catch fire with love? What do we love in them, brothers? Their limbs mangled by wild beasts? What sight is fouler, if you should consult the eyes of the flesh? What is more beautiful, if you should consult the eyes of the heart? How does a very handsome young man, but a thief, appear to you? How your eyes do stare in terror! Are the eyes

69. Cf. Jn 17.3.

71. Ibid.

70. Cf. Ps 26.4.

of the flesh terrified? If you should consult them, there is nothing better structured than that body, nothing better arranged. The symmetry of the limbs and the loveliness of his complexion entice the eyes. And yet when you hear that he is a thief, you flee from the man because of your mind.


(2) On the other side you see a bent-over old man, leaning on a cane, scarcely able to move, ploughed all over with wrinkles. What do you see that delights the eyes? You hear that he is just; you love him, you embrace him. Such rewards were promised to us, my brothers; love some such thing, sigh for such a kingdom, long for such a country, if you wish to attain that with which our Lord came, that is, grace and truth. But if you desire physical rewards from God, you are still under the Law and therefore you will not fulfill the Law itself.

(3) For when you see that these temporal things abound in those who offend God, your steps waver and you say to yourself, "Look, I worship God. I run to church every day; my knees are worn out from praying. And yet I am constantly sick. Some men commit murders and commit robberies; they exult and abound, it goes well for them." Were these then the sort of things you were looking for from God? Surely you belonged to grace. If God gave grace to you, precisely because he gave it gratuitously, love gratuitously. Don't love God for a reward; he is himself your reward. Let your soul say, "One thing I have asked of the Lord; this shall I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, that I may gaze upon the delight of the Lord."<sup>72</sup>

(4) Fear not that you may fail from a surfeit; such will be the delight in beauty that it will always be present to you and you will never be sated—rather you will always be sated, and yet never be sated. For if I say that you will not be sated, there will be hunger; if I say that you will be sated, I fear surfeit. Where there will be neither surfeit nor hunger, I know not what I should say. But God has that which he may show to those who find no way to express it and yet believe that they will receive it.

## TRACTATE 4

### *On John 1.19-33*

OU HAVE HEARD very often, holy people, and you know very well that, the more renowned John the Baptist was among those born of women<sup>1</sup> and the more humble in acknowledging the Lord, the more he deserved to be the friend of the bridegroom, loving zealously the bridegroom and not himself,<sup>2</sup> seeking not his own honor but that of his judge whom he preceded as a herald. Thus it was granted to the preceding Prophets to foretell the future events about Christ, but to this man to point to him with his finger.

(2) For just as Christ was unknown by those who did not believe in the Prophets before he came, so, even when he was present, he was unknown by them. For he had come at first in lowliness and hidden—the more lowly, the more hidden; but the people, scorning God's lowliness through their pride, crucified their Savior and made [him] their condemner.

2. But surely will not he who first came hidden, because he came in lowliness, later come manifestly, because in exaltation? You just heard the Psalm: "God will come manifestly, our God, and will not keep silence."<sup>3</sup> He kept silence in order to be judged; he will not keep silence when he has begun to judge. It would not be said, "He will come manifestly," unless he had first come hidden; nor would it be said, "He will not keep silence," unless he first kept silence. How did he keep silence? Inquire from Isaiah: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before the one who would shear him. He was without a voice; so he did not open his mouth."<sup>4</sup>

1. Cf. Mt 11.11.

3. Cf. Ps 49.3.

2. Cf. Jn 3.29.

4. Cf. Is 53.7.

(2) But "He will come manifestly, and he will not keep silence." How "manifestly"? "Fire will go before him, and round about him will be a mighty storm."<sup>5</sup> That storm has to remove from the threshing floor all the chaff which is now being threshed; and the fire has to burn what the storm has removed. But now he is quiet; he is quiet in judgment, but he is not quiet in instruction. For if Christ is quiet, what meaning do the Gospels have? What meaning do the words of the apostles have? Or the songs of the Psalms? Or the utterances of the Prophets? For in all these Christ is not quiet. But now he is quiet so as not to inflict punishment; he is not quiet so as not to give admonition.

(3) But he will come in glory for punishment, and he will appear to all, even to those who do not believe in him. But now, because, even though present, he was hidden, it was necessary that he should be despised. For were he not despised, he would not be crucified; and if he were not crucified, he would not pour out his blood, the price at which he redeemed us. But, in order to pay the price for us, he was crucified; in order to be crucified, he was despised; in order to be despised, he appeared in lowliness.

3. Yet because he appeared in mortal body, as if in night, he lit a lamp for himself whereby he might be seen.<sup>6</sup> This lamp was John about whom you have already heard many things. And the present gospel reading contains the words of John, first, and this is the most important point, proclaiming that he was not the Christ. Yet there was such great excellence in John that one could believe him to be the Christ; and his humility was proven in the fact that he said that he was not, although one could believe that he was.

(2) Thus, "This is the witness of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites to him from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'" But they would not have sent them, unless they were stirred by the excellence of his authority, because he dared to baptize. "And he confessed and did not deny." What

5. Cf. Ps 49:3.

6. Cf. Jn 5:35.

did he confess? "And he confessed, 'I am not the Christ.'"

4. "And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elias?'" For they knew that Elias was going to precede the Christ. For the name of the Christ was not unknown to anyone among the Jews. They did not think that this man was the Christ; but they did not at all [think] that the Christ would not come. At the very time when they were looking for him to come, they so stumbled against him when he was present, as if they stumbled against a low stone.<sup>7</sup> For that stone was as yet small, recently indeed hewn from a mountain without hands, as the Prophet Daniel says that he had seen a stone hewn from a mountain without hands.

(2) But what follows? "And that stone," he says, "increased, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole face of the earth."<sup>8</sup> See, then, beloved people, what I am saying. Before the Jews Christ had already been hewn from a mountain. [Daniel] intends the mountain to be understood as the kingdom of the Jews. But the kingdom of the Jews had not filled the whole face of the earth. That stone was hewn from it because from it the Lord was born in his life here [on earth]. And why without hands? Because a virgin gave birth to Christ without involving any man.<sup>9</sup> Already, therefore, that stone had been hewn without hands before the eyes of the Jews, but it was a low [stone]. And not improperly so, since that stone had not yet increased and filled the earth. He showed this in his own kingdom, which is the Church, by which he has filled all the face of the earth.

(3) Because, then, he had not yet increased, they stumbled against him as if against a stone, and in them there was brought about what was written, "Whoever will fall upon that stone will be smashed to pieces; but upon whomever that stone will fall, it will grind them to powder."<sup>10</sup> First they fell upon him in his lowliness; in exaltation he will come upon them. But in order that when he will come in exaltation he may grind them

7. Cf. Rom 9.32–33.

8. Cf. Dn 2.34–35.

9. The Latin *sine opere virili* is almost untranslatable. Cf. Lk 1.34.

10. Cf. Lk 20.18.

to powder, he has first smashed them in his lowliness. They stumbled against him and they were smashed, not ground up, but smashed; he will come in exaltation and will grind them. But the Jews must be forgiven because they stumbled against a stone which had not yet increased.

(4) What sort of men are they who stumbled against the mountain itself? You already know about whom I am talking.<sup>11</sup> They who deny the Church spread through the whole world stumble, not against a low stone, but against the mountain itself; for that stone became [the mountain] when it increased. In their blindness the Jews did not see the low stone. How great a blindness it is not to see the mountain!

5. And so they saw him in lowliness and did not recognize him. He was shown to them by the lamp. For first that man, than whom no greater one had arisen among those born of women,<sup>12</sup> said, "I am not the Christ." And when it was said to him, "Are you Elias?" he answered, "I am not." For Christ sends Elias before him; and he said, "I am not" and created a difficulty for us. For it is to be feared that they who understand less may think that John had said the opposite of what Christ said. For in a certain passage when the Lord Jesus Christ said certain things about himself in the gospel, those disciples answered him, "Why then do the scribes," i.e., the experts on the Law, "say that Elias must come first?"<sup>13</sup> And the Lord said, "Elias has come already, and they have done to him what they wanted."<sup>14</sup> And if you are willing to know it, he is John the Baptist.<sup>15</sup> The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Elias has come already, and he is John the Baptist." John, however, when asked, proclaimed that he was not Elias, just as [he proclaimed] that neither was he the Christ. And, indeed, just as he truly proclaimed that he was not the Christ, so he truly proclaimed that neither was he Elias.

(2) How then shall we compare the words of the herald with the words of the judge? Far be it from the herald to lie; for he

11. The Donatists, who were strictly a North African sect.

12. Cf. Mt 11.11.

13. Cf. Mt 17.10.

14. Cf. Mt 17.12.

15. Cf. Mt 11.14.

says what he hears from the judge. Why then did he say, "I am not Elias" and the Lord said, "He is Elias"? Because in him the Lord Jesus Christ wished to prefigure his future coming and to say this, that John was in the spirit of Elias. And what John was to the First Coming, this will Elias be to the Second Coming. Just as there are two comings of the judge, so there are two heralds. There is indeed the same judge, but two heralds, not two judges. For it was necessary for the judge first to come to be judged. He sent before him the first herald; he called him Elias because in the Second Coming Elias will be what John was in the First.

6. For consider, beloved people, how truly I speak. When John was conceived, or rather when he was born, the Holy Spirit prophesied that this was to be fulfilled with regard to that man. "And he will be," he said, "the forerunner of the most high, in the spirit and power of Elias."<sup>16</sup> Not then Elias, but "in the spirit and power of Elias." What is, "in the spirit and power of Elias"? In the same Holy Spirit in place of Elias. Why in place of Elias? Because what Elias is to the Second Coming, this John was to the First. Correctly then John has just now answered in the strict sense. For the Lord [said] in a figurative sense, "John is Elias himself;"<sup>17</sup> but he, as I said, in the strict sense, [said,] "I am not Elias." If you should look to the figure of forerunning, John himself is Elias; for what the former is to the First Coming, the latter will be to the Second. If you should examine the strict designation of the particular individual, John is John, Elias is Elias. The Lord then [said] correctly for the purpose of prefiguration, "He is Elias." But John [said] correctly for the purpose of strict designation, "I am not Elias." Neither John [spoke] falsely, nor the Lord falsely, neither the herald falsely, nor the judge falsely, but only if you understand.

(2) But who will understand? He who imitates the lowliness of the herald and acknowledges the loftiness of the judge. For nothing was lowlier than this herald. My brothers, John had

16. Cf. Lk 1.17.

17. Cf. Mt 11.14.

no merit so great as that from this humility, because, although he could deceive men and be thought to be the Christ and be accepted as the Christ (for of such great grace and of such great excellence was he), nevertheless he openly acknowledged and said, "I am not the Christ." "Are you Elias?" Now, if he said, "I am Elias," then Christ, already coming in the Second Coming, would be judging, [but] would still not be judged in the First. As if saying, "Elias is also going to come," he said, "I am not Elias." But heed the lowly one before whom John came, that you may not perceive the ill affects of the exalted one before whom Elias is to come. For the Lord also finished the statement thus, "John the Baptist is he who is going to come."<sup>18</sup>

(3) He came in that prototype in which Elias will come strictly in his own person. Then Elias will be Elias by strict designation, now he was John by likeness. Now John is John by strict designation, but he is Elias by likeness. Both heralds gave their likenesses to each other and yet kept strictly their own persons. But the Lord, the judge, is one whether the one herald precedes or the other.

7. "And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elias?' And he said, 'No.' And they said to him, 'Are you a prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' They therefore said to him, 'Who are you? That we may give an answer to these who sent us. What do you say of yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying in the desert.'" Isaiah said that.<sup>19</sup> This prophecy was fulfilled in John: "I am the voice of one crying in the desert." Of one crying what? "Straighten the way of the Lord, make the paths of our God straight."<sup>20</sup>

(2) Does it not seem to you to be the herald's task to say, "Move back, make a path"? Except that the herald says, "Move back," John says, "Come." The herald keeps [men] away from the judge; John calls [men] to the judge. Rather, John calls men to a lowly one that he may not be perceived as a judge in his exaltation. "I am the voice of one crying in the desert,

18. Cf. Mt 17.11, 13.

19. Cf. Is 40.3.

20. Augustine's version of Isaiah's words in Jn 1.23 is a variant of both Jn 1.23 and Is 40.3.

straighten the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the Prophet." He did not say, "I am John, I am Elias, I am a Prophet." But what did he say? "I am called this, 'the voice of one crying in the desert, straighten the way for the Lord.' I am the prophecy itself."

8. "And they who were sent were from among the Pharisees"; that is, from among the leaders of the Jews. "And they asked him, and said to him, 'Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet?'" [It was] as if to baptize seemed to be an act of audacity, as if, [they were asking], "in what official capacity?" We ask whether you are the Christ; you say that you are not. We ask whether perhaps you are his forerunner, because we know that Elias will come before the arrival of the Christ; you say that you are not. We ask whether you are some herald, that is, a prophet, coming long before him, and have received this power; you say that you are not a prophet.

(2) And John was not a prophet; he was greater than a prophet. The Lord gave the following witness concerning him: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"<sup>21</sup> You understand, of course, "not shaken by the wind" because John was not the sort of person who would be moved by the wind; for he who is moved by the wind is blown about by every seductive breeze.<sup>22</sup> "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments?"<sup>23</sup> For John was clothed in rough garments, that is, a tunic made of camel hair. "Behold, those who are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings."<sup>24</sup> Therefore you did not go out to see a man clothed in soft garments. "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? And I say to you, this one is greater than a prophet."<sup>25</sup> Because the Prophets have predicted long before, but John was pointing to one who was present.

9. "'Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet?' John answered them, and said, 'I bap-

21. Cf. Mt 11.7.

22. Augustine may have Eph 4.14 in mind here.

23. Cf. Mt 11.8.

24. Ibid.

25. Cf. Mt 11.9.

tize with water, but in the midst of you there has stood one whom you do not know.” In fact the lowly one was not being seen, and for that reason the lamp was lighted. See how he, who could be thought something else, gives way. “He it is who comes after me, who has been made before me.” That is, as we already said,<sup>26</sup> he has been placed before me. “The strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to loose.” How abject he made himself! And thereby he was very much uplifted; for he who humbles himself will be exalted.<sup>27</sup>

(2) From this, holy people, you ought to see that,<sup>28</sup> if John so humbled himself that he said, “I am not worthy to loose the strap,” how they have to be humbled who say, “We baptize, what we give is ours, and what is ours is holy.” He said, “not I but that one;” they say, “we.”<sup>29</sup> John is not worthy to loose the strap of his sandal; but if he would say that he was worthy, how humble would he be? Even if he could say that he was worthy and could say it as follows: “He comes after me who was made before me, only the strap of whose sandal I am worthy to loose,” he would have humbled himself greatly. But when he says that he is not even worthy of this, truly he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he who [being] a servant, acknowledged the Lord in this way and deserved to become a friend from being a servant.

10. “These things were done in Bethany, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and he said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world.’” Let no one claim for himself and assert that he takes away the sin of the world. Now notice those proud men at whom John pointed his finger. For heretics had not yet been born and he was already pointing them out; then from the river he was shouting

26. Cf. *Tractate* 3.7.

27. Cf. Lk 14.11; Mt 23.12.

28. The translation retains the anacoluthon in this sentence to keep the extemporaneous quality of the style of the *Tractates*.

29. A reference to the Donatists who claimed to be the only true Christian church, to have the only true baptism, and hence, to be the only source of true holiness.

out against them, against whom he now shouts out from the gospel.

(2) Jesus comes, and what does he say? "behold, the Lamb of God." If a lamb is innocent, John, too, is a lamb. Or is it that not even he is innocent? But who is innocent? Innocent to what extent? All come from that scion and from that shoot about which David sings with a deep sigh, "I was conceived in iniquity, and in sins did my mother nourish me in her womb."<sup>30</sup> Therefore that one alone is the Lamb who has not come in this way. For he was not conceived in iniquity, because he was not conceived of mortality. Nor did his mother nourish him in her womb in sins, that one whom a virgin conceived, and [to whom] a virgin gave birth; for she conceived him in faith and received him in faith.

(3) Therefore, "Behold, the Lamb of God." He is not a scion stemming from Adam;<sup>31</sup> he took only the flesh from Adam, he did not assume his sin. He who has not assumed the sin from our clayey mass<sup>32</sup> is the one who takes away our sin. "Behold, the Lamb of God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world."

11. You know that certain men<sup>33</sup> sometimes say, "We, who are holy, take away men's sins; for if he who baptizes is not holy, how does he take away another's sin, since he is himself a man full of sin?" Against these arguments let us not utter our own words, let us read this [Evangelist]: "Behold, the Lamb of

30. Cf. Ps 50.7. Some texts have this as verse 5. Augustine's reading "nourished" (*aluit*) differs from the "conceived" of both the *Septuagint* and the *Vulgate*; he has the same reading in *En in Ps* 50.10.29 (CCL 38.607).

31. Another allusion to Traducianism; see *Tractate* 3.12, note 44. Here the special problem of the origin of Jesus' soul is addressed since his soul could not carry with it the original sin as it would if it were generated in a normal way from the soul of his human parent. Augustine's view is that the only begotten either derived for himself a soul without sin (a generationist position) or he created a new soul for his human body (a creationist position); see *Epistula* 190.24 (PL 33.866; CSEL 57.160; and FOTC 30.287–288).

32. The Latin word *massa*, always difficult to translate into English, here represents the Greek *phýrama* from Rom 9.21. *Phýrama* is that which is kneaded, dough or paste, and in Paul means a lump of potter's clay, hence my translation. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 865–866.

33. See section 9 and note 29.

God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world." Let human beings not be presumptuous toward human beings. Let the sparrow not flee over to the mountains,<sup>34</sup> let it trust in the Lord. And if it lifts its eyes to the mountains, from which help will come to it, let it understand that its help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth.<sup>35</sup>

(2) Of such great excellence is John! It is said to him, "Are you the Christ?" He says, "No." "Are you Elias?" He says, "No." "Are you a prophet?" He says, "No." "Why therefore do you baptize?" "Behold, the Lamb of God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, 'After me there comes a man who was made before me, because he was before me.'" "After me there comes" because he was born later. "He was made before me," because he was placed before me. "He was placed before me," because "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."<sup>36</sup>

12. "And I knew him not," he said, "But that he might be made manifest to Israel, for this reason have I come baptizing with water." And John gave testimony, saying, 'I saw the Spirit leave descending from the sky as a dove, and he remained upon him. And I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I saw and gave testimony that this is the Son of God.'"

(2) Pay attention for a little while, my beloved people. When did John come to know Christ? For he had been sent to baptize with water. The question was asked "Why?" "That he might be made manifest to Israel," he said. What good did the baptism of John do? My brothers, if it did any good, even now it would remain, and men would be baptized by the baptism of John; and thus they would come to the baptism of Christ.<sup>37</sup> But what does he say? "That he might be made manifest to

34. Cf. Ps 10.2.

35. Cf. Ps 120.1-2. See also *Tractate* 1.6 and 7.

36. Jn 1.1.

37. Augustine also discusses this question in *Tractate* 5.3-5.

Israel," that is, to Israel itself, to the people of Israel that Christ might be made manifest, he came to baptize with water. John received the ministry of baptism, to prepare the way for the Lord with the water of penitence, since the Lord was not there.<sup>38</sup> But when the Lord was known, preparing a way for him was superfluous, because he himself became the way to those who knew him. And thus the baptism of John did not last long.

(3) But how was the Lord shown? A lowly man, that thus John might receive a baptism in which the Lord himself would be baptized.

13. And was there a need for the Lord to be baptized? I quickly answer also with questioning. Was there a need for the Lord to be born? Was there a need for the Lord to be crucified? Was there a need for the Lord to be buried? So, if he assumed so great a lowliness for us, would he not receive baptism? And what good did it do for him to receive the baptism of a servant? That you might not disdain to receive the baptism of the Lord.

(2) Pay attention, my beloved people. There might be in the church some catechumens of more eminent grace. For it sometimes happens that one sees a catechumen who abstains from all sexual intercourse, who renounces the world, who gives up everything he possessed, distributing it to the poor, and he is a catechumen, even instructed, perhaps, in saving doctrine beyond many of the faithful. For this man one must feel apprehensive lest he say to himself about holy baptism by which sins are forgiven, "What more am I going to receive? Look, I am better than this one of the faithful and than that one of the faithful" as he ponders the fact that some of the faithful are married, or perhaps uninstructed, or hold and own their property, while he has already distributed his to the poor. [And this man,] reflecting that he is better than that one who

38. Berrouard takes this phrase as a nominative absolute, thus "since the Lord **did** not yet come forward." He cites in support of this interpretation C. Mohrmann on the nominative absolute in Augustine's sermons, "Die Psychologischen Bedingungen der Konstruktionslosen Nominativi in den Sermones des. Hl. Augustin," *Études sur le latin des chrétiens* (Rome, 1958) 1. 319-320.

has already been baptized, may disdain to come to baptism, saying, "Am I to receive this which this man and that man have?" And he may in his own mind review those whom he despises and it may seem to him of virtually no value to receive what lesser men have received, because he already seems to himself to be a better man. And yet all of his sins remain with him; and unless he comes to saving baptism, where sins are loosed, for all his excellence he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(3) But the Lord, in order to invite [a person of] such excellence to his own baptism, that his sins might be forgiven him, came himself to the baptism of his servant; and even though he himself had nothing to be forgiven him, and nothing in him to be washed, he received baptism from a servant. And [it is] as if he addressed a son who was proud and extolling himself, and disdaining perhaps to receive together with the uninstructed that from which salvation can come to him, and as if he were saying, "How greatly do you show pride in yourself? How greatly do you exalt [yourself]? How great is your excellence? How great is your grace? Can it be greater than mine? If I came to a servant, do you disdain to come to the Lord? If I received the baptism of a servant, do you disdain to be baptized by the Lord?"

14. For that you may know, my brothers, that the Lord did not come to this John from the necessity of any bond of sin, John himself said, when the Lord came to him to be baptized, as the other evangelists say, "Do you come to me? I ought to be baptized by you."<sup>39</sup> And what did he answer him? "Let it be so now; let all justice be fulfilled."<sup>40</sup> What does it mean, "Let all justice be fulfilled"? Have I come to die for men, but do not have to be baptized for men? What does it mean, "Let all justice be fulfilled"? Let all humility be fulfilled. What then? Was he who received suffering at the hands of evil servants, not to receive baptism from a good servant?

(2) Now, pay attention! When the Lord was baptized, if John baptized him precisely so that by John's baptism the Lord

39. Cf. Mt 3.14.

40. Cf. Mt 3.15.

might show his lowliness, should no one else have been baptized with the baptism of John? But many were baptized with the baptism of John; the Lord was baptized with the baptism of John, and the baptism of John stopped. From that time John was put into prison, and from then on no one is found baptized with that baptism. If, then, John for his part came baptizing precisely so that the Lord's lowliness might be shown to us, so that, because he received it from a servant, we might not disdain to receive it from the Lord, should John have baptized the Lord alone?

(3) But if John were to baptize the Lord alone, there would be those who would think that the baptism of John was holier than that of Christ, as if Christ alone had been entitled to be baptized with the baptism of John, but the human race with the baptism of Christ. Pay attention, my beloved people. With the baptism of Christ have we been baptized, not only us, but also the whole world, and this baptism continues to the end. Who of us can be compared in any way with Christ, the strap of whose sandal John said he was unworthy to loose? If, therefore, the Christ, so greatly preeminent, a man and God, [if he] had alone been baptized in the baptism of John, what were people going to say? "What kind of baptism did John have? He had a great baptism, an ineffable sacrament. For see Christ alone deserved to be baptized with the baptism of John." And thus the baptism of the servant would seem greater than the baptism of the Lord.

(4) Others were also baptized with the baptism of John in order that John's baptism might not seem better than Christ's; but the Lord also was baptized so that, because the Lord received the baptism of a servant, other servants might not disdain to receive the baptism of the Lord. For this purpose, then, had John been sent.

15. But did he know Christ or did he not know him? If he did not know him, why did he say, when Christ came to the river, "I ought to be baptized by you."<sup>41</sup> That is, "I know who you are." If, therefore, he already knew him, he certainly rec-

41. Cf. Mt 3.14.

ognized him at the time he saw the dove descending. It is clear that the dove descended upon the Lord but only after he ascended from the water of baptism. The Lord was baptized and ascended from the water; the heavens were opened, and [John] saw the dove above him. Therefore, if the dove descended after the baptism, and before the Lord was baptized, John said to him, "Do you come to me? I ought to be baptized by you," [then] he knew beforehand him to whom he said, "Do you come to me? I ought to be baptized by you." How then did he say, "And I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him as a dove, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'"?

(2) That is no small question, my brothers. If you have seen the question, you have seen no small thing; it remains for the Lord to give its solution. Still I say this, if you have seen the question, it is no small thing. Look, John has been put before your eyes. John the Baptist standing at the river. Look, the Lord comes, still to be baptized, not yet baptized. Hear the voice of John, "Do you come to me? I ought to be baptized by you." Look, he already recognizes the Lord, by whom he wishes to be baptized. After his baptism the Lord ascends from the water; the heavens are opened, the Spirit descends, now John recognizes him. If he just now recognizes him, why did he say before, "I ought to be baptized by you"? But if he does not just now recognize him because he already knew him, why is it that he said, "I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him as a dove, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'"?

16. Brothers, if this question were resolved today, it would burden you, I do not doubt, because much has already been said. But you should know that this question is so important that it alone could destroy the sect of Donatus. I have spoken to you, my beloved people, for the purpose of getting your attention, in my customary way, [but] at the same time so that you may pray for us and for yourselves, that the Lord may grant to us to speak what is proper, and that you may deserve

to understand what is proper. In the meantime, consider it proper to put it off today. But I say this to you briefly until the solution is given: inquire peacefully, without strife, without contentiousness, without disputes, without hostilities. Both raise the question among yourselves, and inquire of others, and say, "Our bishop proposed this question to us today; one day, if the Lord grants it, he will resolve it."

(2) But whether it should be resolved or not resolved, consider that I have proposed a matter that bothers me; for I am bothered considerably. John says, "I ought to be baptized by you,"<sup>42</sup> as if he recognized Christ, for if he did not recognize him by whom he wanted to be baptized, he said, "I ought to be baptized by you" rashly. Therefore he knew him. If he knew him, why then is it that he said, "I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him as a dove, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'?"

(3) What are we to say? That we do not know when the dove came? That they may not perhaps hide in that, let the other evangelists be read who said it more plainly, and we find most clearly that the dove descended then when the Lord ascended from the water.<sup>43</sup> For upon him who had been baptized the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit descending. If he recognized him [only] when he was already baptized, how does he say to him when he is coming to baptism, "I ought to be baptized by you"?

(4) In the meantime mull over it among yourselves; confer with each other about it; discuss it among yourselves. May the Lord, our God, grant that, before you hear it from me, he may reveal it to some one of you first. Nevertheless, brothers, you should know this, that through the solution of this question, the sect of Donatus, if they should have a sense of decency, will have nothing at all to say about the grace of baptism, wherein they befog the inexperienced and stretch nets for flying birds. Their mouths will be completely shut.

42. Ibid.

43. Cf. Mt 3.16; Mk 1.10; Lk 3.21-22.

## TRACTATE 5

### *On John 1.33*

**I**S THE LORD WILLED, we have arrived at the day of our promise; he will also grant this, that we may be able to arrive at the fulfillment of the promise itself.<sup>1</sup> For then, the things that we say, if they are useful for us and for you, are from him; but the things that are from man are lies, as our Lord, Jesus Christ, himself said, "He who speaks a lie speaks from what belongs to himself."<sup>2</sup> No one has anything of what belongs to him except lying and sin. But if a man has any truth and justice, it is from that fountain we ought to thirst in this desert, so that we, sprinkled from it with some drops, as it were, and comforted for a while in this sojourn abroad,<sup>3</sup> may not fail on the way, but may be able to come to his rest and fullness. Therefore if "he who speaks a lie speaks from what belongs to himself," he who speaks the truth speaks from what belongs to God.

(2) John is truthful, Christ is truth. John is truthful, but every truthful man is truthful from the truth. If, therefore, John is truthful and a man cannot be truthful except from the truth, from whom was he truthful except from him who said, "I am the truth"?<sup>4</sup> Thus neither could the truth speak against the truthful, nor the truthful against the truth. The truth sent

1. Cf. *Tractate* 4.16 and also *En in Ps* 126.13 which was preached the previous day.

2. Cf. *Jn* 8.44. In *Tractate* 42.12–13 where this verse is commented upon in its own place Augustine uses a different reading, *de propriis*, rather than as here, *de suo*.

3. *In hac peregrinatione* is the familiar early Christian metaphor that our life in this world is a journey of exile from our real home and our real life with God.

4. Cf. *Jn* 14.6.

the truthful; and he was truthful for the very reason that he had been sent by the truth. If the truth had sent John, Christ had sent him.

(3) But what Christ does with the Father, the Father does; and what the Father does with Christ, Christ does. Neither does the Father do anything apart, without the Son; nor the Son apart, without the Father: inseparable love, inseparable unity, inseparable majesty, inseparable power, according to these words which he himself asserted, "I and the Father are one."<sup>5</sup>

(4) Who then sent John? If we should say the Father, we speak truly; if we should say the Son, we speak truly. But it is quite clear that we should say the Father and the Son. But him whom the Father and the Son have sent, that one God has sent, because the Son said, "I and the Father are one." How then did he not know him by whom he was sent? For he said, "I knew him not, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me." I question John. What did he who sent you to baptize with water say to you? "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." Did he who sent you, O John, say this to you? It is clear that [he said] this. Then who sent you? The Father, perhaps. God the Father is true, and God the Son is truth; if the Father sent you without the Son, God sent you without the truth. But if you are truthful precisely because you speak the truth and you speak in conformity with the truth, the Father did not send you without the Son, but the Son and the Father together sent you. Therefore, if the Son, too, together with the Father, sent you, how did you not know him by whom you were sent? He himself, whom you had seen in truth, sent you that he might be recognized in the flesh, and he said, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit."

2. Did John hear this that he might know him whom he did

5. Jn 10.30. Very literally in both Greek and Latin it is translated, "I and the Father, we are one thing."

not know, or that he might more fully know him whom<sup>6</sup> he already knew? For if he did not know him in any regard, he would not say to him as he came to the river to be baptized, "I ought to be baptized by you. Do you come to me?"<sup>7</sup> Therefore he did know.

(2) But when did the dove descend? When the Lord had already been baptized and was ascending from the water. But if he who sent him said, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit," and he did not know him but recognized him when the dove descended, [and] the dove moreover descended then when the Lord ascended from the water, [yet], however, John had then recognized the Lord when the Lord came to him at the water, [then] it is clear to us that John knew the Lord in a certain way and did not yet know him in a certain way.

(3) But unless we have understood this, he was a liar. How was he truthful, in his recognition who says, "Do you come to me" to be baptized, and "I ought to be baptized by you"? Is he truthful when he says this? And again how is he truthful when he says, "I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'"? The Lord became known through the dove, not to one who did not know him, but to one who knew something regarding him, but also did not know something. It is our task, therefore, to ask what John did not yet know regarding him and learned through the dove.

3. Why was John sent baptizing? I remember that I have already told you, as far as I was able, my beloved people.<sup>8</sup> For if the baptism of John was necessary for our salvation, it should have been performed even now. For it is not that men are not saved now, or that more men are not saved now, or that there

6. The CCL text reads *quam*, apparently erroneously, for *quem*, the reading of Migne and other editors; there is no indication of variant readings. If *quam* is accepted, the text should be translated, "that he might know more fully than he already knew."

7. Cf. Mt 3.14.

8. See *Tractate* 4.12–14.

was one salvation then and another now. If Christ has been changed, salvation, too, has been changed; if salvation is in Christ, and if Christ is the same, we have the same salvation.

(2) But why was John sent baptizing? Because it was necessary for Christ to be baptized. Why was it necessary for Christ to be baptized? Why did Christ need to be born? Why did Christ need to be crucified? For if he had to come to show the way of humility and to make himself the very way of humility, humility ought to have been fulfilled by him in all things. Hence he deigned to give authority to his own baptism that his servants might know with what eagerness they ought to run to the Lord's baptism since he himself did not disdain to receive a servant's baptism. For this has been granted to John, that the baptism be called his.

4. My beloved people, ponder this, observe it discriminatively, and know it. The baptism which John received was called John's baptism. He alone received such a gift; there was no just man before him, none after him, to receive a baptism which would be called his baptism. He did, to be sure, receive it; for he could not do anything on his own. For if anyone speaks on his own, he speaks a lie from what belongs to himself.<sup>9</sup> And from what source did he receive it except from the Lord, Jesus Christ? He received the power to baptize from that one whom he later baptized. Don't be astonished! For Christ did this regarding John just as he did some particular thing regarding his mother.

(2) For it was said about Christ, "all things were made through him."<sup>10</sup> If all things [were made] through him, through him also Mary was made from whom afterwards Christ was born. Pay attention, my beloved people. As he created Mary and was created through Mary, so he gave baptism to John and was baptized by John.

5. Therefore he received baptism from John for this reason, that by receiving what was inferior from an inferior, he might encourage inferiors to what was superior. But why was not he alone baptized by John, if John, through whom Christ

9. Cf. Jn 8.44 and section 1.

10. Jn 1.3; cf. *Tractate* 1.12–15.

was to be baptized, had been sent for the very purpose of preparing the way for the Lord, that is, for Christ himself? And we have already explained this,<sup>11</sup> but we recall it because it is necessary for the question at hand. If our Lord, Jesus Christ, had alone been baptized by the baptism of John—hold fast to what we say—the world would not have such power as to erase from your hearts what the Spirit of God has written there, and the thorns of anxieties would not have such power as to choke the seed which is sown in you.<sup>12</sup> For why are we compelled to repeat the same things except that we are not sure about the memory of your heart?

(2) Well, then, if the Lord alone had been baptized by the baptism of John, there would be those who would so regard it that they would consider the baptism of John to be greater than the baptism of Christ. For they would say, “So much greater is that baptism that Christ alone had deserved to be baptized with it.” Thus, that an example of humility might be given to us by the Lord, for obtaining the saving power of baptism, Christ received what was not necessary for him but was necessary for our sakes. And again, so that this which Christ received from John might not be preferred to the baptism of Christ, others were also allowed to be baptized by John.

(3) But for those who were baptized by John, that baptism was not sufficient. For they were baptized with the baptism of Christ because the baptism of John was not the baptism of Christ. Those who receive the baptism of Christ do not seek the baptism of John; those who received the baptism of John sought the baptism of Christ. Therefore the baptism of John was sufficient for Christ.

(4) How would it not suffice since it was not even necessary? For no baptism was necessary for him, but he received the baptism of a servant to encourage us to his baptism. And that the baptism of a servant might not be preferred to the baptism of the Lord, others were baptized by the baptism of their fellow servant. But they who were baptized by the baptism of

11. Cf. *Tractate* 4.14.

12. Cf. Lk 8.14.

their fellow servant needed to be baptized by the baptism of the Lord; but they who are baptized by the baptism of the Lord have no need of the baptism of the fellow servant.

6. Now whereas John had received a baptism that would properly be called John's, the Lord, Jesus Christ, however did not wish to give his baptism to anyone, not that no one might be baptized with the Lord's baptism, but that the Lord himself might always be baptizing. This was done so that the Lord might baptize also through ministers, that is, that those whom the Lord's ministers were going to baptize, the Lord, not they, would be baptizing. For it is one thing to baptize in the role of a minister; another to baptize with power.

(2) For the quality of the baptism is commensurate with the quality of the person by whose power it is given, not with the quality of the person through whose ministry it is given. As John was, such was the quality of John's baptism; [his] baptism was in accord with justice as that of a just man, yet still of a [mere] man, but one who had received this grace from the Lord, and a grace so great that he was worthy to precede the judge, and to point him out with his fingers, and to fulfill the words of that prophecy: "The voice of one crying out in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord."<sup>13</sup>

(3) On the other hand as the Lord is, such is the quality of baptism; therefore the baptism of the Lord is divine because the Lord is God.

7. But the Lord, Jesus Christ, could, if he willed, have given power to any servant of his that he might give his baptism in his place, so to speak; and he could have transferred the power of baptizing from himself and have established it in any servant of his and have given to the baptism transferred to the servant as great a power as the baptism given by the Lord had. He did not wish this for the reason that the hope of the baptized might then reside in the one by whom they acknowledged that they had been baptized. He did not, then, wish a servant to put hope in a servant. And for this very reason the

13. Cf. Mt 3.3, Mk 1.2, and Lk 3.4. Augustine here uses a slight variant of the text from the Synoptic Gospels rather than the text from Jn 1.23 upon which he has already commented in *Tractate* 4.7.

Apostle cried out when he saw men who wanted to put hope in him, "Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"<sup>14</sup> Therefore Paul baptized as a minister, not as power itself, but the Lord baptized as power.

(2) Pay attention. He could have given this power to servants, and he was not willing [to do so]. For if he gave this power to servants, that is, in such a way that what belonged to the Lord would belong to them, there would be as many baptisms as there were servants, so that as men said, "John's baptism," they would say "Peter's baptism," so "Paul's baptism," so "James' baptism," "Thomas' baptism," "Matthew's," "Bartholomew's"; for that one was called "John's baptism." But perhaps someone balks and says, "Prove to us that that baptism was called John's." I shall prove it from the words of the truth himself when he asked the Jews, "The baptism of John, from where is it? From heaven or from men?"<sup>15</sup>

(3) Therefore, to prevent as many baptisms from being called after as many servants as there were who baptized by power received from the Lord, the Lord kept for himself the power of baptizing and gave administration [of baptism] to the servants. The servant says that he baptizes; he does speak correctly, as the Apostle says, "Oh, and I baptized also the household of Stephanas,"<sup>16</sup> but as a minister. So, even if a man should be evil and happen to have the ministry, even if men do not know him and God knows him, God who has kept the power for himself allows baptism to be performed through him.

8. But John did not know this in the Lord. That he was the Lord, he knew; that he ought to be baptized by him, he knew. And he admitted that he was the truth and that he, the truthful, was sent by the truth; this he knew. But what did he not know in him? That he was going to retain for himself the power of his baptism and was not going to transmit or transfer it to any servant, but that, whether a good servant were to baptize as a minister or a bad servant were to baptize as a min-

14. Cf. 1 Cor 1.13.

15. Cf. Mt 21.25.

16. Cf. 1 Cor 1.16.

ister, that man who was being baptized would know that he was baptized only by him who kept for himself the power of baptizing.

(2) And may you understand, brothers, that John did not know this in him and learned this through the dove. For he knew the Lord, but did not yet know that he would retain for himself the power of baptizing and would give it to no servant; accordingly, he said then, "I knew him not." And that you may know that he learned this there, pay attention to what follows: "But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is.'" What is he? The Lord. But he already knew the Lord. Suppose, then, that John had said only this much, "I knew him not. But he who sent me to baptize with water said to me." Do we ask what he said? He continues, "'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him.'" I do not say what follows. Meanwhile, pay attention. "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is." But what is he? What did he who sent me intend to teach me through the dove? That he was the Lord? I already knew by whom I had been sent; I already knew him to whom I said, "Do you come to me to be baptized? I ought to be baptized by you."<sup>17</sup> To this extent I knew the Lord, that I wanted to be baptized by him, not that he should be baptized by me.

(3) And then he said to me, "Let it be so now. Let all justice be fulfilled."<sup>18</sup> I have come to suffer; do I not come to be baptized? "Let all justice be fulfilled," my God says to me. "Let all justice be fulfilled"; let me teach complete humility. I know there will be proud men among my future people; I know there will be some men in a more excellent state of grace, so that when they see ordinary persons being baptized, these persons, because they seem to themselves better either because of their continence, or almsgiving, or learning, these persons, perhaps, disdain to receive what those inferior men have received. There is need for me to heal them, that they

17. Cf. Mt 3.14 and *Tractate* 4.14.

18. *Ibid.*

may not disdain to come to the baptism of the Lord because I have come to the baptism of the servant.

9. Therefore, John already knew this, and he knew the Lord. What, then, did the dove teach? What did he who sent him to whom he said, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is," what did he mean to teach through the dove, that is, through the Holy Spirit coming in this manner? Who is he? The Lord. I know. But did you already know this, that the Lord, having the power of baptizing, would give that power to no servant but would retain it for himself, so that everyone who is baptized through the ministry of the servant may ascribe it not to the servant, but to the Lord? Did you already know this? I did not know this; what in fact did he say to me? "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit."

(2) He does not say, "He is the Lord." He does not say, "He is the Christ." He does not say, "He is God." He does not say, "He is Jesus." He does not say, "It is he who was born of the Virgin Mary, after you, before you."<sup>19</sup> He does not say this; for John already knew this. But what did he not know? That the Lord himself would retain and hold for himself such great power of baptism, whether [he is] present on earth or absent [on earth], since his body is in heaven, and [he is] present in majesty, that he would retain for himself the power of baptism, so that Paul might not say, "my baptism," and Peter might not say, "my baptism." Mark you, therefore, pay attention to the words of the apostles. No one of the apostles said, "my baptism." Although there was one gospel of all, still you find that they said, "my gospel"; you do not find that they said, "my baptism."

10. This, then, John learned, my brothers. What John learned through the dove, let us, too, learn. For the dove did not teach John, and not teach the Church, the Church to which it was said, "One is my dove."<sup>20</sup> Let the dove teach the

19. I.e., who was born after you although he already existed before you did.

20. Cant 6.8 (NAB 6.9).

dove, let the dove know what John learned through the dove. The Holy Spirit descended in the appearance of a dove. But why did John learn in the dove that which he learned in the dove? For he needed to learn; but perhaps he did not need this [viz., to learn] but to learn through the dove.

(2) What am I to say about the dove, my brothers? Or when do I have sufficient power either of heart or tongue to speak the way I wish? And perhaps the way I wish to speak is unworthy of the way it ought to be spoken. And yet even if I can speak the way I wish, how much less can I speak the way it ought to be spoken? I would like to hear about this from someone better than I and not to speak of it to you.

11. John becomes acquainted with him whom he knew; but he becomes acquainted with an aspect in him which he did not know in him. In regard to what he knew he does not learn. And what did John know? The Lord. What did he not know? That the power of the Lord's baptism would pass from the Lord to no man, but that the ministry clearly would pass; that the power would pass from the Lord to no one, [but] the ministry [would pass] to both the good and the wicked. Let the dove not shudder at the ministry of wicked men, let it regard the Lord's power. What does a wicked minister do to you where the Lord is good? How does a malicious bailiff shackle you if the judge is benevolent? John learned this through the dove. What is it that he learned? Let him repeat it himself. He says, "He said to me, 'He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, as a dove, and remaining upon him, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'"

(2) Therefore, let not the seducers, O dove, deceive you, who say, "We baptize." Dove, acknowledge what the dove taught. "This is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." Through the dove it is learned that this is he; and do you think that you are baptized by his power by whose ministry you are baptized? If you think this, you are not yet in the body of the dove; and if you are not in the body of the dove, no one need wonder that you do not have simplicity. For simplicity is particularly represented by the dove.

12. Why did John learn, my brothers, through the sim-

plicity of the dove that "this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" unless it were because they were not doves who have shattered the Church? They were hawks, they were falcons.<sup>21</sup> A dove does not tear to pieces. And you see that they hate us for alleged persecutions which they have suffered. And they have indeed suffered seeming bodily persecutions, although they were the scourgings of the Lord clearly imposing discipline for a time, that he might not damn them for eternity if they did not recognize this [discipline] and correct themselves.

(2) They truly persecute the Church who persecute by de-cits; they strike the heart more gravely who strike with the sword of the tongue; they pour out blood more bitterly who, as far as it is possible for them, kill Christ in a man. They seem almost terror-stricken by the decision of the [civil] authorities. What does authority do to you if you are good? But if you are evil, fear authority: "For he does not bear the sword in vain," says the Apostle.<sup>22</sup> Take not out your sword with which you smite Christ. Christian, what do you persecute in a Christian? What did the Emperor persecute in you? He persecuted the flesh; you persecute the spirit in a Christian. You do not kill the flesh. And yet not even the flesh do they spare. As many as they could, they have cudged to death, and have spared neither their own nor those who did not belong to them.<sup>23</sup> This is known to all. Authority is odious because it is legitimate. He acts odiously who acts lawfully. He acts without arousing hatred who acts contrary to the laws.

(3) Let each and every one of you examine closely, my brothers, what a Christian has. In that he is a human being, he shares [his humanity] with many; in that he is a Christian, he is separated from many. And that he is a Christian has more relevance to him than that he is a human being. For in that he is a Christian he is remade according to the image of God by whom he was made a human being according to the

21. The Latin *malvus* is strictly a "kite" or "glede"; but since this is a less familiar bird, the more generic "falcon" is translated here.

22. Cf. Rom 13:4.

23. The infamous Circumcellions attacked not only Catholics but also the Rogatists and Maximianists, dissident Donatist sects.

image of God;<sup>24</sup> but in that he is a human being, he could also be wicked, he could also be a pagan, he could be an idolator. You persecute in a Christian the better part which he has; for you wish to take away from him that by which he has life. For he lives for time by the breath of life by which the body is animated; but he lives for eternity by the baptism which he has received from the Lord.

(4) You wish to take from him this which he has received from the Lord; you wish to take from him this, by which he has life. This is what bandits want [in regard to] those whom they wish to plunder, that they themselves have more and the others have nothing. You both take from him and you will have no more for yourself; for you will get no more for yourself because you take away from him. But they actually do exactly what those who take away a man's life do; they both take away from another, and yet do not themselves have two lives.

13. What then do you wish to take away? In what way does he whom you wish to rebaptize displease you? You cannot give what he already has, but you cause him to deny what he has. What did a pagan, a persecutor of the Church, ever do that was more repulsive? Their swords were brandished against the martyrs, wild beasts were uncaged, flames were applied. Why [did they do] these things? That he who was suffering them might say, "I am not a Christian." What do you teach him whom you wish to rebaptize except first to say, "I am not a Christian"? For the same purpose for which the persecutor formerly employed flame, you employ your tongue; you do by seduction what he failed to accomplish by murder.

(2) And what is it that you are going to give, and to whom are you going to give [it]? If he should say the truth to you and should not, having been seduced by you, lie, he will say, "I have." You ask, "Do you have baptism?" "I have," he says. As long as he says, "I have," you say, "I am not going to give." "And do not give; for what you want to give cannot abide in me because what I received cannot be taken away from me. And yet, wait; let me see what you want to teach me." "First,"

24. Cf. Col 3.10.

he says, "say, I do not have." "But I do have this; if I say, I do not have, I lie; for what I have, I have." "You do not have," he says. "Show me that I do not have." "A wicked person gave [it] to you." "If Christ is evil, an evil person gave [it] to me." "Christ is not evil," he says, "but Christ did not give [it] to you." "Then who gave [it] to me? Answer me; I know that I received from Christ." "[Someone] gave it to you, but some traitor,"<sup>25</sup> he says, "not Christ."

(3) "I shall see who was the minister, I shall see who was the bailiff. I am not arguing about the [judge's] attendant; I concentrate my attention on the judge. And your objection against the attendant is probably a lie. But I don't want to keep on probing. Let the Lord of both of us examine the case of his attendant. Perhaps if I demand proof of you, you have no proof. Rather, you are lying. It has been proven that you could not have proven it."<sup>26</sup> But I do not rest my case on that; so do not think that, when I have eagerly begun to defend innocent men, I have placed my hope only in innocent men. Let the men be whatever it pleases [you to call them]; I have received from Christ, I have been baptized by Christ."

(4) "No," he says, "but that bishop baptized you; and that bishop is in communion with them." "I have been baptized by Christ; I know." "How do you know?" "The dove which John saw taught me. Oh wicked hawk, you are not tearing me from the bowels of the dove; I am numbered among the members of the dove, because I know what the dove taught. You say to me that this man baptized you or that man baptized you. 'Through the dove it is said to me and to you, 'He it is who baptizes.' Whom do I believe, the hawk or the dove?"

25. The Latin term is *traditor*, a person who, during the persecution of Diocletian, handed over his copy of the Scriptures to the authorities to be burned. Cf. Frend, *Donatist Church*, 8. The Donatists applied the term also to those bishops and presbyters whose consecrations and ordinations could be shown to have come from a *traditor*.

26. Augustine is referring to the election of Caecilianus to the bishopric of Carthage in 311 or 312 A.D. and his consecration by three bishops, one of whom, Felix, was accused of *traditio*, falsely, it would appear. This dispute finally melded the scattered and ill-organized anti-ecumenical parties in North Africa into a solid schismatic sect.

14. Tell me clearly, that you may be confounded through that lamp by which his earlier enemies, the likes of you, the Pharisees, were also confounded. When they asked the Lord by what authority he did those things, he said, "I also shall ask you this question. Tell me, the baptism of John, from where is it? From heaven or from men?"<sup>27</sup> And they, who were preparing to unleash their snide attacks were ensnared by this question; and they began to consider among themselves and to say, "If we shall say 'from heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why did you not believe him?'"<sup>28</sup> For John had said of the Lord, "Behold, the lamb of God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world."<sup>29</sup> Why then do you ask by what authority I act? O wolves, I do what I do by the authority of the Lamb. But that you might know the lamb, why did you not believe John who said, "Behold, the Lamb of God; behold, he who takes away the sin of the world"?

(2) Therefore, they, knowing what John has said of the Lord, said among themselves, "If we shall say that" the baptism of John "is from heaven, he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" But if we shall say that it is from men, we shall be stoned by the people; for they hold John as a prophet.<sup>30</sup> In one regard they feared men, in another they were confounded to admit the truth. The answer of darkness was darkness,<sup>31</sup> but it was overpowered by light.

(3) For what did they answer? "We do not know." As regards what they did know, they said, "We do not know." And the Lord said, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."<sup>32</sup> And his first enemies were confounded. From what? From the lamp. Who was the lamp? John. Do we have a proof that he was the lamp? We do have a proof. For the Lord said, "He was a lamp, burning and shining."<sup>33</sup> Do we have a proof that his enemies were also confounded from him? Hear the

27. Cf. Mt 21.24–25. This scriptural passage has also been discussed in *Tractate 2.9*.

28. Cf. Mt 21.26.

29. Cf. Jn 1.29.

30. A conflation of Mt 21.26 and Lk 20.6.

31. Cf. Jn 1.5.

32. Cf. Mt 21.27.

33. Cf. Jn 5.35.

Psalm. It says, "I have prepared a lamp for my Christ; his enemies I will clothe with confusion."<sup>34</sup>

15. Still in the darkness of this life we walk by the light of the lamp of faith. Let us also hold John as a lamp, let us also, by him, confound Christ's enemies. Even better, let him confound his enemies through his lamp. Let us also ask what the Lord [asked] the Jews; let us ask and say, "The baptism of John, from where is it? From heaven, or from men?"<sup>35</sup> What will they say? See if they, too, are not confounded by the lamp as enemies. What will they say? If they shall say, from men, even their own people will stone them. But if they shall say, from heaven, let us say this to them, "Why then did you not believe him?" Perhaps they say, "We do believe him." "How, then, do you say that you baptize, but John says, 'He it is who baptizes'?"

(2) "But," they say, "those through whom baptizing is done, the ministers of so great a judge, ought to be just men." And I say, and we all say, that the ministers of so great a judge ought to be just. Let the ministers be just, if they will. But if they who sit upon the chair of Moses wish not to be just, my master has made me untroubled, about whom his Spirit said, "He it is who baptizes." How has he made me untroubled? He says "The scribes and the Pharisees sit upon the chair of Moses. Do what they say; but do not do what they do, for they say and do not."<sup>36</sup> If the minister is just, I rank him with Paul, I rank him with Peter. I rank just ministers with them, because, in fact, just ministers do not seek their own glory; for they are ministers, they do not wish to be considered as judges, they dread that hope be put in them. Therefore I rank the just minister with Paul. For what does Paul say? "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase."<sup>37</sup>

(3) He who is a proud minister, however, is in a class with the devil, but uncontaminated is the gift of Christ which flows

34. Cf. Ps 131.17-18.

36. Cf. Mt 23.2-3.

35. Cf. Mt 21.25.

37. 1 Cor 3.6-7.

through him undefiled, which passes perfectly clear through him and comes to fertile soil. Suppose that [the proud minister] is made of stone because he cannot produce fruit from the water. The water passes through the stone conduit, the water passes on to garden plots; in the stone conduit it produces nothing but nevertheless brings forth plentiful fruit in gardens. For the spiritual power of a sacrament is like light in this way: it is both received pure by those to be enlightened, and if it passes through the impure, it is not defiled. Let the ministers be just, indeed, and let them not seek their own glory but his whose ministers they are. Let them not say, "It is my baptism," because it is not theirs. Let them pay heed to John himself.

(4) Look, John was filled with the Holy Spirit; and he had a baptism from heaven, not from men. But how long did he have it? He said, "Prepare the way for the Lord."<sup>38</sup> But when the Lord was known, he himself became the way; there was no longer need for the baptism of John, by which the way was to be prepared for the Lord.

16. Yet what do they usually say to us? "Look, there was baptism after John." For before this question was thoroughly investigated in the Catholic church, many men, both great and good,<sup>39</sup> erred about it. But because they were from among the members of the dove, they did not cut themselves off, and what the Apostle said happened in them: "If you understand anything in another way, this also God will reveal to you."<sup>40</sup> Hence, those who separated themselves became impossible to teach. Well, then, what do they usually say? "Look, there was baptism after John; is there not baptism after the heretics? For

38. Cf. Jn 1.23; Is 40.3.

39. Augustine probably has uppermost in his mind Cyprian and the Synod of Carthage held on September 1, 256 A.D. In the *De Baptismo contra Donatistas* (PL 43.107-244; and CSEL 51.10-376) he had discussed their arguments at some length. See Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 872-873. On Cyprian's views cf. G. Willis, *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Heresy* (London, 1950), 145-151; M. Sage, *Cyprian* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 295-355; and W. Sparrow Simpson, *St. Augustine and African Church Divisions* (London, 1910), 80-89.

40. Cf. Phil 3.15.

certain persons who had the baptism of John were ordered by Paul to be baptized; for they did not have the baptism of Christ.<sup>41</sup>

(2) "Why then do you exaggerate the merit of John, and, as it were, belittle the unhappy condition of the heretics?" I, too, grant you that the heretics are impious; but the heretics gave the baptism of Christ, a baptism which John did not give.

17. I return to John and say, "He it is who baptizes." For John is better than a heretic just as John is better than a drunkard, and as John is better than a murderer. If we ought to baptize after one who is worse because the apostles baptized after one who is better, [then they, too, ought to baptize] whoever among them have been baptized by a drunkard<sup>42</sup>—I do not say by a murderer, I do not say by a satellite of some miscreant,<sup>43</sup> I do not say by a thief of other people's property, I do not say by an oppressor of orphans, nor by a wrecker of marriages, I do not speak of any of these. I speak of what is a common practice,<sup>44</sup> I speak of what is an everyday occurrence; I speak of a general invitation, even in this city, when they hear it said, "Let's feast."<sup>45</sup> "Let's have a good time," and "you

41. Cf. Acts 19.1–7.

42. Augustine frequently mentions the prevalence of drunkenness among the Donatists; Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 874, provides a long list of references. Augustine was particularly distressed when this drunkenness accompanied celebrations in honor of martyrs in the churches. See *Tractate 10.4* and *Tr In Io Ep 4.4*.

43. The "satellite" is the Donatist bishop, Optatus of Thamugadi, and the "miscreant" is Gildo, who was appointed *Comes Africae* by the Emperor Theodosius in 386 A.D. and led an unsuccessful revolt against the Emperor Honorius in 397–398 A.D. Optatus, if not actually an aide of Gildo, received the Court's support in acts of violence against both the Catholics and the Donatist sect called the Maximianists. Cf. Willis, 22–23, and Frend, *Donatist Church*, 208–226. He is accused by Augustine elsewhere, especially in the *Contra Litteras Petilianas*, 2.23.53, 44.104, 103.237 (PL 43.276–277, 295, 340–341; and CSEL 52.51–52, 81, 150–152), of all the crimes listed here except drunkenness; see Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 873–874.

44. This might be translated "a ritual observance" or "a holiday rite" as in Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 330; but "a common practice" seems to me more appropriate to this context.

45. The Latin reads *alogiemus*. This might also be translated, "let us be irrational," incorporating a familiar ancient notion that at festival time it was permissible and desirable to ignore, even invert, normal moral and social

oughtn't fast on such a feast day of January."<sup>46</sup> I speak of these trivial, everyday frivolities.

(2) When baptism is administered by a drunken fellow, who is better, John or the drunkard? Answer, if you can, that your drunkard is better than John. This you will never dare! Therefore, because you are sober, baptize after your drunkard. For if the apostles baptized after John, how much the more ought the sober man baptize after the drunkard! Or do you say, "The drunkard is in unity with me"?<sup>47</sup> Then was not John, the friend of the bridegroom, in unity with the bridegroom?

18. But I say to you, whoever you are, "Are you better, or is John?" You will not dare to say, "I am better than John." Therefore, let your followers baptize after you if they are better than you. For if baptism was administered after John, blush that baptism is not administered after you. You are going to say, "But I have the baptism of Christ, and I teach it." At least, then, acknowledge the judge and be not a proud bailiff.

(2) You give the baptism of Christ, and for that reason baptism is not administered after you; and baptism was admin-

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practices. Augustine, *Epistula* 36.5.11 (PL 33.140–141; CSEL 34.34–35; and FOTC 12.147), defines *alogia* as an indulgence in banquets to the extent that one "is turned aside from the path of reason." It is "an immoderate dinner where the mind, in which the reason rules, is somehow overwhelmed by one's gorging on food and drink." Hence my translation of this verb. The verb occurs only twice in ancient writings, here and in the fourth-century grammarian Dositheus in a list of verbs normally with passive forms that are sometimes used actively. Cf. H. Keil, (Leipzig, 1880), 8.430; see TLL 1.1714.

46. The Latin text reads *tali die festo Ianuariarum*, i.e., "New Year's Day." Cf. D. DeBruyne, "Le Dies Festus Ianuariarum du Tractatus Quintus S. Augustini In Ioannis Evangelium," *Revue Bénédictine* 43 (1931) 347. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 331, thinks that no specific feast can be identified here, simply one of the various pagan festivals in January that created problems for Christians. But *Sermo* 198.1 (PL 38.1024; and FOTC 38.55) clearly supports the view that this is New Year's Day. Although it is not wholly clear that sermons 197 and 198 are Augustine's, they do correspond to two sermons listed by Possidius as two *Tractates* on New Year's Day against the pagans.

47. Augustine here sees holiness as adhering to the individual minister as to an individual person, whereas the Donatists had a different view, that holiness was objective, belonging to the Church as a whole, more than subjective, depending upon the individual's personal behavior: see Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 332–333.

istered after John for this reason, because he did not give Christ's baptism, but his own; for he had received it in such a way that it was his. Therefore you are not better than John, but the baptism which is given through you is better than John's; for it is Christ's, but the other was John's. And what was given by Paul, and what was given by Peter, is Christ's; and if it was given by Judas, it was Christ's. Judas gave it, and baptism was not administered after Judas. John gave it, and baptism was administered after John. For, if baptism was given by Judas, it was Christ's; but that which was given by John was John's.

(3) We do not prefer Judas to John; but we do rightly prefer Christ's baptism, even when given through Judas' hands, to John's baptism, even when given through John's hands. And indeed, it was said about the Lord before he suffered, that he baptized more persons than John; and then it was added, "Though he himself did not baptize, but his disciples."<sup>48</sup> He himself, and yet not himself; he himself by power, they by their ministry. They performed a service in baptizing; the power of baptizing remained in Christ. Therefore his disciples were baptizing, and Judas was still there among his disciples. Thus those whom Judas baptized were not baptized again; and those whom John baptized, were they baptized again? Again, certainly, but not by repeating [that] baptism. For those whom John baptized, John baptized; but those whom Judas baptized, Christ baptized.

(4) Likewise, therefore, those whom the drunkard baptized, those whom a murderer baptized, those whom an adulterer baptized, if it was the baptism of Christ, Christ baptized. I fear not the adulterer nor the drunkard nor the murderer, because I give heed to the dove through whom it was said to me, "He it is who baptizes."

19. But it is madness, my brothers, to say that, I do not say only Judas, but any man at all was of superior merit than he of whom it was said, "Among those born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist."<sup>49</sup> Therefore no

48. Cf. Jn 4.1-2.

49. Cf. Mt 11.11.

servant is preferred to him, but the baptism of the Lord, even when given through an evil servant, is preferred to the baptism even of a servant who was a friend. Hear what sort of men the Apostle Paul tells us [are] false brothers preaching the word of God in envy. And what does he say about them? "In this I rejoice, yes, and I shall rejoice."<sup>50</sup> For they were proclaiming Christ, out of envy, it is true, but still Christ. Look not at why, but at whom [they proclaim].

(2) Is Christ preached to you out of envy? Look at Christ; shun the envy. Do not imitate the wicked preacher, but imitate the good one who is preached to you. Christ, as I was saying, was being preached by some out of envy. And what is it, to envy? A terrible evil. By this same evil the devil was cast down; that very malignant pestilence cast him down. And certain preachers of Christ had it; and yet the Apostle allows them to preach. Why? Because they were preaching Christ.

(3) But he who envies hates; and he who hates, what is said of him? Hear the Apostle John: "He who hates his brother is a murderer."<sup>51</sup> Look, baptism was administered after John; after a murderer baptism was not administered. For John gave his own baptism; the murderer gave Christ's baptism. And this sacrament is so holy that it cannot even be polluted when a murderer administers it.

20. I do not reject John, but rather I believe John. Why do I believe John? Because he learned through the dove. What did he learn through the dove? "He it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." Now therefore, brothers, hold fast to this, fix it in your hearts. For if I wanted to tell you today more fully why through the dove, there is not enough time. For I explained to you, my holy people—at least so I think—that a matter which he had to learn was imparted to John by the dove, [a matter] concerning Christ which John did not know even though he already knew Christ.

(2) But why this matter needed to be shown through a dove, I should say if I could say it more briefly. But because that discussion needs much time and I do not wish to burden you,

50. Cf. **Phil** 1.15–18.

51. Cf. 1 **Jn** 3.15.

since I have been helped by your prayers to fulfill that which I promised, if once again I have the aid of your devout attention and good prayers, that, too, will be clear to you why John should not have learned except through the dove what he learned concerning the Lord, namely that "He it is who baptizes in the Holy Spirit," and that he bequeathed the power of baptizing to no one of his servants.

## TRACTATE 6

● *On John 1.32–33*

**A**Y HOLY PEOPLE, I had feared, I admit it to you, that this cold [weather] might cool your enthusiasm for coming together; but, because you show by the great number and crowd of you that you are on fire in the spirit, I have no doubt that you have also prayed for me that I may pay what is owed to you.

(2) For I had promised in the name of Christ, since then the shortness of time prevented me from being able to give an interpretation and explanation of it, to discuss today why God wanted to show the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. That this may be explained, this day has dawned for us. And I see that, because of a desire for listening and a holy devoutness, you have come together in unusual numbers.<sup>1</sup> May God, through our mouth, fulfill your expectation. For you have loved [so much] that you came. But what [is it] you have loved? If us, this, too, is good; for we want to be loved by you, but we do not want to be loved in ourself. Therefore, because we love you in Christ, love us in return in Christ; and let our love for one another [voice its] moaning to God, for moaning is itself characteristic of the dove.

2. If, then, moaning is characteristic of a dove, as we all know, but doves moan in love, hear what the Apostle says, and do not wonder that the Holy Spirit wished to be shown in the form of a dove. He says, “For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with unspeakable moanings.”<sup>2</sup> Well now, my brothers, are we

1. For the translation of *celebrius*, “in unusual numbers,” see Browne, 80. This seems best to convey the thought here.

2. Cf. Rom 8.26.

to say this, that the Spirit moans when he has perfect and eternal happiness with the Father and the Son? For the Holy Spirit is God, as the Son of God is God and the Father God. I have said "God" thrice, but I have not said three gods; for there is God thrice rather than three gods. For the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God. You know this very well. Therefore the Holy Spirit does not moan in himself with himself in that Trinity, in that beatitude, in that eternity of his substance; but he moans in us because he makes us moan.

(2) And it is no small thing that the Holy Spirit teaches us to moan. For he makes known to us that we are in exile, and he teaches us to sigh for our native land, and we moan with that very longing. He who is well off in this world, rather who thinks he is well off, who revels in the enjoyment of carnal things, and in the abundance of temporal possessions, and in a hollow happiness, has the voice of a raven; for the voice of the raven is full of loud shrieking, not of moaning. But he who knows that he lives in the midst of the affliction of this mortal life, and that he is exiled from the Lord,<sup>3</sup> that he does not yet possess that unending beatitude which has been promised to us, but that he has it in hope, and will have it in fact, when the Lord comes with shining brightness in his manifestation, who before came hidden in his lowliness—he who knows this is the one who moans.

(3) And as long as he moans on this account, he moans well; the Spirit has taught him to moan, he has learned how to moan from the dove. For many moan in dealing with un-earthly unhappiness; either shaken by losses, or depressed by physical illness, or shut up in prisons, or bound in chains, or tossed by the waves of the sea, or trapped by some treachery of their enemies, they moan. But they do not moan with the moaning of the dove; they do not moan with the love of God; they do not moan with the Spirit. And so when such men have been freed from these afflictions, they rejoice in loud voices, and from this it is clear that they are ravens, not doves. Rightly the raven was sent from the ark and it did not return; the

3. Cf. 2 Cor 5.6.

dove was sent and returned. Noe sent both the birds.<sup>4</sup> Noe had the raven there; he also had the dove. That ark contained each kind.

(4) If the ark symbolized the Church, you see, of course, that it is necessary for the Church in this flood of the world to contain each kind, both the raven and the dove. Who are the ravens? They who seek the things that are their own.<sup>5</sup> Who are the doves? They who seek the things that are Christ's.

3. Therefore when he sent the Holy Spirit, he showed him visibly in two ways, as a dove and as fire; as a dove upon the baptized Lord, as fire upon the assembled disciples. For when the Lord had ascended into heaven after the Resurrection, after he had spent forty days with his disciples, when the day of Pentecost had come, he sent the Holy Spirit to them as he had promised.

(2) And so, the Spirit came at that time and filled that place; and when at first, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, there came a sound from heaven as though a violent wind were blowing, [Scripture] says, "There appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, and it sat upon every one of them; and they began to speak in tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them to speak."<sup>6</sup> Here we saw a dove upon the Lord; there parted tongues upon the assembled disciples; in the one, simplicity is shown, in the other, fervor. For there are those who are said to be simple and they are indolent; they are called simple, but they are lazy.

(3) Not such a one was Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> He was simple, because he harmed no one; he was fervent, because he reproached the impious. For he did not keep silence before the Jews; his are those fiery words: "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you have always resisted the Holy Spirit."<sup>8</sup> Great vehemence! He rages, but [he is] a dove without bile. For, that you may know that he raged without bile, they who were ravens, when they heard these words, immediately ran for stones [to use] against the dove. Stephen be-

4. Cf. Gn 8.6-9.

6. Cf. Acts 2.1-4.

8. Cf. Acts 7.51.

5. Cf. Phil 2.21.

7. Cf. Acts 6.5.

gan to be stoned; and he, who but a little before was raging and boiling in spirit, as if he had attacked his enemies, and as if he had assailed them with violence by those fiery and blazing words as you have heard, "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ear," so that he who heard these words might think that Stephen, if he were allowed, wished them straightaway annihilated—when the rocks were coming upon him from their hands, upon his knees he said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."<sup>9</sup> He had adhered to the unity of the dove.

(4) For earlier his master, upon whom the dove descended, had done that; hanging on the cross, he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."<sup>10</sup> Therefore in the dove it has been shown that those sanctified by the Spirit should have no deceit; in the fire it has been shown that their simplicity should not remain frigid.

(5) And let it not disturb [you] that the tongues were parted. For tongues<sup>11</sup> are different, and so he made his appearance in parted tongues. "Parted tongues," [Scripture] says, "as of fire, and it sat upon everyone of them." Tongues differ from one another, but the difference of tongues does not constitute schisms. In parted tongues, fear not disintegration; recognize unity in the dove.

4. So therefore, it was necessary for the Holy Spirit to be shown coming upon the Lord in that manner in order that each and every one may understand that, if he has the Holy Spirit, he ought to be simple like a dove; that with his brothers he ought to have true peace, which the kisses of doves signify. For ravens also have kisses; but in ravens there is a false peace, in the true dove peace. Therefore not everyone who says, "Peace be with you," should be hearkened to as a dove.<sup>12</sup>

(2) How then are the kisses of ravens distinguished from the kisses of doves? Ravens kiss, but they lacerate; the nature

9. Cf. Acts 7.60.

10. Lk 23.24.

11. The English word *tongue* and the Latin word *lingua* both allow the same play on connotations, that is, tongue as the organ of speech and taste, and as a language.

12. Cf. *Tractate* 1.2.

of doves is innocent of laceration. Where, then, there is laceration, there is not true peace in kisses; they have true peace who have not lacerated the Church. For ravens feed on death; the dove does not have this characteristic. It lives on the fruits of the earth; its food is innocent, and this, brothers, must be truly admired in the dove. Sparrows are very small; even they kill flies. The dove does none of this; for it does not feed itself on death. Those who have lacerated the Church feed themselves on the dead.

(3) God is powerful; let us ask him that they who are devoured by them and do not perceive it may come to life again. Many recognize this because they come to life again; for at their coming we daily rejoice in the name of Christ. You, be simple, but only in such a way that you may be fervent and let your fervor be on your tongues. Do not be silent; but speaking with glowing tongues, enkindle the frigid.

5. What then, my brothers? Who cannot see what they do not see? And no wonder, since they do not wish to return from there, like the raven which was sent from the ark. For who cannot see what they do not see? And they are ungrateful to the Holy Spirit himself. Look, the dove descended upon the Lord, and upon the baptized Lord; and there appeared therein that holy and true Trinity which is to us one God. For the Lord ascended from the water, as we read in the gospel: "And behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and it remained upon him. And immediately a voice followed: 'You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'"<sup>13</sup> The Trinity appears very clearly: the Father in the voice, the Son in the man, the Spirit in the dove.

(2) As for what purpose the apostles were sent in this Trinity, let us see what we do see and what an amazing thing it is that they do not see [it]. For, the fact is, it is not true that they do not see, but they close their eyes to that which hits them in the face, that is the purpose for which the apostles were sent,

13. Cf. Mk 1.10–11, Mt 3.16–17, Lk 3.21–22; Augustine's text differs from all three.

in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, by him about whom it was said, "He it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." For it was said to his ministers by him who kept that power for himself.

6. For John saw this in him and came to know what he did not know. It was not that he did not know him to be the Son of God, or did not know him to be the Lord, or did not know him to be the Christ, or did not, also, in fact, know that he himself would baptize with water and the Holy Spirit; for he knew this too. But that he would baptize in this way, namely, that he would keep for himself the power and would transfer it to no one of his ministers, this is what he learned in the dove. For through this power, which Christ kept for himself alone and transmitted to none of his ministers, although he deigned to baptize through his ministers, through this abides the unity of the Church, which is signified in the dove, about which it is said, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has."<sup>14</sup>

(2) For if, my brothers, as I have already said,<sup>15</sup> the power were transferred from the Lord to a minister, then there would be as many baptisms as there were ministers and the unity of baptism would no longer stand.

7. Pay attention, brothers. Before our Lord Jesus Christ came to baptism (for after the baptism there descended the dove in which John came to know something that was the Lord's alone, when it was said to him, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit"), [John] knew that he was baptizing with the Holy Spirit; but that he was doing so with this peculiar characteristic,<sup>16</sup> that the power [of baptism] would not pass from him to another even though

14. Cf. Song 6.8 (NAB 6.9). This vexed verse not only presents textual problems but is rather difficult to interpret; it is here translated as the context requires.

15. Cf. *Tractate* 5.7-9.

16. *Tali proprietate*. One might also translate this, "with such proprietorship."

the other confers it,<sup>17</sup> this he learned there. And how do we prove that John already also knew that the Lord would baptize with the Holy Spirit, so that it may be understood that he learned this in the dove, namely, that the Lord would baptize with the Holy Spirit in such a way that the power would pass over to no other man? How do we prove it?

(2) The dove descended when the Lord was already baptized; but before the Lord came to be baptized by John in the Jordan, we said that he knew him because of those words where he says, "Do you come to me to be baptized? I ought to be baptized by you."<sup>18</sup> But look, he did know [him as] the Lord, he did know [him as] the Son of God. How do we prove he already knew that he would baptize with the Holy Spirit? Before he came to the river, when many were flocking to John to be baptized, he said to them, "I indeed baptize you in water. But he who is coming after me is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire."<sup>19</sup> He already knew this too.

(3) What then has he learned through the dove so that he may not afterwards be found a liar (God forbid that we should think such a thing!) except that there would be a certain peculiar characteristic in Christ, such that, although many ministers would baptize, whether [they were] just or unjust, the holiness of baptism would be ascribed only to him upon whom the dove descended, about whom it was said, "He it is who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." Let Peter baptize; he it is who baptizes. Let Paul baptize; he it is who baptizes. Let Judas baptize; he it is who baptizes.<sup>20</sup>

8. For if baptism is holy in proportion to the diversity of merits, because merits are diverse, baptisms will be diverse;

17. This either means "even though the minister confers baptism," as I take it, in agreement with Berrouard, or "even though he, that is, the Lord, confers the ministry," as Gibb and Browne take it.

18. Cf. Mt 3.14.

19. Augustine's quotation is a conflation of Mt 3.11 and Jn 1.27.

20. Cf. *Tractate* 5.18.

and the better the person from whom one seems to have received something, so much the more does he suppose that he is receiving a better thing. But understand this, brothers, that the saints themselves, the good who are associated with the dove,<sup>21</sup> who are associated with the destiny of that city of Jerusalem, the good themselves in the Church, about whom the Apostle says, "The Lord knows who are his,"<sup>22</sup> [these saints] possess different graces; they do not all have equal merits. Some are holier than others, some are better than others. Therefore if one should be baptized, for instance, by a true saint, while another by one with less merit before God, one of lesser hierarchical rank,<sup>23</sup> with less continence and of a lesser spiritual life, why, nevertheless, is that which they have received one and equal and identical, except that "He it is who baptizes"?

(2) Therefore, just as when a good man and a better man baptize, one man does not receive a good [baptism] and the other a better one, but even though the ministers are one good and the other better, what they have received is one and identical, not better in one and inferior in the other, so also when an evil man baptizes, either for some lack of knowledge or from some toleration on the part of the Church (for either the evil are not known or they are tolerated; even chaff is tolerated until the wheat on the threshing-floor has been completely winnowed),<sup>24</sup> that which has been given is one, and it is not unequal because the ministers are unequal, but is equal and identical because, "He it is who baptizes."

9. Therefore, my dearest people, let us see what they do not wish to see, not what they cannot see, but what they would grieve to see, as if it were made inaccessible to them. Where were the disciples sent in the name of the Father and of the

21. The dove has a double symbolic purpose; it represents both the Holy Spirit and the Church (cf. section 6 and *Tractate* 5.20). Here it symbolizes the Church. On dove imagery in Augustine's sermons see Poque, 1.19-20, 332-334.

22. 2 Tm 2.19.

23. Following Berrouard, *Homélie I-XVI*, 359.

24. Cf. Mt 3.12 and Lk 3.17.

Son and of the Holy Spirit, to baptize the ministers? Where were they sent? "Go," he said, "baptize the nations."<sup>25</sup> You have heard, brothers, how that inheritance came: "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession."<sup>26</sup> You have heard how the Law went forth from Sion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup> For there the apostles heard, "Go, baptize the nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>28</sup>

(2) We became attentive when we heard, "Go, baptize the nations." In whose name? "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." This is one God, because [it is] not in the *names* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Where you hear one name, there is one God. As it was said about the seed of Abraham and as the Apostle Paul explains, "In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed,"<sup>29</sup> He did not say in *seeds* as in many but as in one, "And in your *seed*, which is Christ."<sup>30</sup> And so, just as, because it does not say there, in *seeds*, the Apostle wanted to teach you that Christ is one, so also here when it was said, "In the *name*" not in the *names* as there "in the *seed*," not in *seeds*, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are proved to be one God.

10. But, look, say the disciples to the Lord, we have heard in what name we are to baptize; you have made us ministers, and you have said unto us, "Go, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>31</sup> Where shall we go? Where? Did you not hear? To my inheritance. You ask, Where shall we go? To that which I bought with my blood. Where then? To the nations, he says. I suppose that he said, "Go, baptize the Africans<sup>32</sup> in the name of the Father and of the

25. Cf. Mt 28.19.

26. Ps 2.8.

27. Cf. Is 2.3.

28. Cf. Mt 28.19.

29. Gn 22.18.

30. Cf. Gal. 3.16. Observe that Augustine has the ablative, *semine tuo*, and not the dative of both the Greek and the *Vulgate*.

31. Cf. Mt. 28.19.

32. The Donatist heresy, although very widespread and strong in Africa, did not find adherents outside of North Africa except for a few small and insignificant congregations, the most important of which was the very small

Son and of the Holy Spirit." Thanks be to God!<sup>33</sup> The Lord solved the problem; the dove taught it. Thanks be to God! The apostles were sent to the nations; if to the nations, to all tongues. The Holy Spirit, parted in tongues, united in the dove, signified this. On this side tongues are parted;<sup>34</sup> on that the dove joins them together. Have the tongues of the nations achieved harmony and only the tongue of Africa become disharmonious? What is clearer, my brothers? In the dove is unity; in the tongues of the nations is community.

(2) For one time through pride the tongues became disharmonious, and then from one the tongues became many. For after the Flood, as if striving to fortify themselves against God, as if there could be anything high for God or anything secure for pride, certain proud men built a tower, ostensibly so that they might not be destroyed by a flood if one came later.<sup>35</sup> For they had heard and recalled that all iniquity had

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congregations, the most important of which was the very small congregation of Africans in Rome. The Donatists claimed that they alone, the Donatist church of North Africa, were the one true Church. Optatus of Milevis, 2.1 (CSEL 26.33), expresses this idea most unmistakably:

You said, brother Parmenianus, that it (the one dove and bride of Christ, i.e., the Church), was among you alone . . . so that the church is there where you want it to be and not there where you wish it not. So, in order that it can be among you, in a small section of Africa, in the corner of a tiny region, will it not be in the rest of Africa among us? Will it not be in the Spains, in Gaul, in Italy, where you are not? If you want it to be only among you, will it not be in the three Pannonias, in Dacia, Moesia, Thrace, Achaia, Macedonia, and in the whole of Greece, where you are not? That it can be among you, will it not be in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Pamphilia, Phrygia, Cilicia, in the three Syrias, in the two Armenias, in the whole of Egypt and Mesopotamia, where you are not? Will it not, then, be in so many countless islands and the other provinces which can scarcely be numbered, where you are not?

33. "Thanks be to God," i.e., *Deo gratias*, had become a rallying cry for the Catholics against the "Praises be to God," i.e., *Deo laudes*, the rallying cry of the Donatists, especially of the Circumcellions who used it as a war chant. See Augustine, *Contra litteras Petilianus* 2.65.146 and 84.186 (PL 43.306 and 318; and CSEL 52.98 and 115-116), and *Epistolae* 108.5.14 (PL 33.414; and CSEL 34.627-628). An account of the Donatist watchword, *Deo laudes*, is found in H. LeClercq, "Deo gratias, Deo laudes," DACL 4.1.652-659. See also Augustine, *En in Ps* 132.6 (CCL 40.1930-1931); Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 362-363; and Frend, *Donatist Church*, 54, 73-74, 144, 174, 184, and 307.

34. Some codices read *dividunt*, i.e., "the tongues separate."

35. Cf. Gu 11.1-9.

been destroyed by the Flood. They were unwilling to abstain from iniquity. They sought the height of a tower against a flood; they built a lofty tower. God saw their pride, and he caused this disorder to be sent upon them, that they might speak but not understand one another; and tongues became different through pride. If pride created differences of tongues, Christ's humility has joined the differences of tongues together. Now what that tower had dispersed, the Church binds together. From one tongue came many; do not be amazed, pride did this. From many tongues comes one; do not be amazed, love did this. For, although there are different sounds of tongues, in the heart one God is invoked, one peace is kept intact.

(3) How then, my dearest people, ought the Holy Spirit, as representing a unity, have been shown except through the dove, that it might be said to the Church made peaceful, "One is my dove"?<sup>36</sup> How ought humility [have been shown] except through a simple and moaning bird, not through a proud bird, exalting itself like the raven?

11. And, perhaps, they will say, therefore, because there is a dove, and one dove, outside the one dove there cannot be baptism. Therefore if the dove is with you, or you are the dove, when I come to you, give me what I do not have. You know this is their position; soon it will be clear to you that it belongs, not to the dove's voice, but to the raven's raucous cry. Now pay attention for a little while, my beloved people, and fear their tricks. Or rather, be cautious and receive the words of our adversaries in order to spit them out, not to gulp them down and ingest them. Do in this instance what the Lord did when they offered him a bitter drink; he tasted it, and spat it out.<sup>37</sup> So also you, listen and reject. For what do they say? Let us see.

(2) Behold, [our adversary] says, you are the dove, O Catholic church. It has been said to you, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has." Surely it has been said to you. Wait! Do not question me; prove first if it has been said to me; I wish to

36. Cf. Song 6.8 (NAB 6.9).

37. Cf. Mt 27.34, Mk 15.23.

hear quickly if it has been said to me. He says, it has been said to you. I answer with the voice of the Catholic church, to me. But brothers, although the sound of this answer has come only from my mouth, the answer has also sounded forth, I believe, from your hearts; and we have all said it together. It has been said to the Catholic church, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has." Outside the dove itself there is no baptism, he says. I have been baptized outside this dove; therefore I do not have baptism. If I do not have baptism, why don't you give it to me when I come to you?

12. I, too, am questioning. Let us put aside for the moment to whom it was said, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has." We are still seeking. Either it was said to me or it was said to you. Let us put aside to whom it was said.

(2) Therefore, I ask you, if the dove is simple, innocent, without bile, peaceful in kisses, not savage in its talons, I ask whether to this dove's members belong the greedy, the robbers, the deceivers, the drunkards, the dissolute—are they members of this dove? Far from it, he says. And in truth, brothers, who would say this? To mention nothing else, if I mention robbers only, they can be members of the hawk, not of the dove. Falcons ravage, hawks ravage, ravens ravage; doves do not ravage, do not tear apart. Thus robbers are not members of the dove.

(3) Has there been not even one robber among you? Why does the baptism remain which a hawk, not a dove, has given? Why do you not baptize among yourselves after the robbers and adulterers and drunkards, after the greedy among you? Or are all these members of the dove? You so dishonor the dove that you make the vulturous its members. What, then, brothers, are we saying? There are good and evil men in the Catholic church; but there are only evil men there. But, perhaps, I say this with a hostile mind; let this, too, be questioned later.

(4) On their side, too, assuredly they say that there are good and evil men; for if they say that they have only good, let their own believe them and I assent. Let them say, there are among us only the holy, the just, the chaste, the sober, no adulterers,

no usurers, no defrauders, no perjurers, no wine guzzlers. Let them say it; for I do not pay attention to their tongues, but I touch their hearts. But since they are known to us and to you and to themselves, as you are also known both to yourselves in the Catholic church and to them, neither let us reprehend them, nor let them flatter themselves. We admit there are good and evil in the Church, but as grain and chaff. Sometimes he who is baptized by grain is chaff, and he who is baptized by chaff is grain. Otherwise, if he who is baptized by grain, has a valid baptism, but he who is baptized by chaff does not, "He it is who baptizes" is a false statement. If, however, it is true, "He it is who baptizes," both what is given by the chaff has validity and he baptizes as the dove does. For that evil man is not a dove nor does he belong to the members of the dove. Nor can he be said to be in the Catholic church nor among them, if they say that the dove is in their own church.

(5) What then do we understand, brothers? Because it is clear and known to all, and because even if they do not wish it, they are convicted, [we understand] that even there when evil men give baptism, another baptism is not given after them; and here when evil men give baptism, another baptism is not given after them. The dove does not baptize after the raven; why does the raven want to baptize after the dove?

13. Pay attention, my beloved people! Why also was something designated through a dove, so that the dove, that is, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, came to the Lord after his baptism and was hovering over him, in consequence of which in the coming of the dove John should understand that [there was] a certain exclusive power in the Lord for baptizing? For through this exclusive power, as I have said,<sup>38</sup> the peace of the Church was confirmed. And it is possible that someone may have baptism outside the dove; but that baptism outside the dove benefits him is impossible.<sup>39</sup>

38. In section 6.

39. Augustine distinguishes between the validity of baptism and its effectiveness. He disagrees with the Donatists in the matter of validity which he sees as coming from Christ himself and not from the minister or the Church;

(2) Pay attention, my beloved people, and understand what I am saying; for often by that chicanery they mislead those of our brothers who are lazy and frigid. Let us be simpler and more zealous.

(3) "Look," they say, "did I receive or didn't I?" I answer, "You received." "Therefore if I received, you have nothing to give me; I am secure, even by your testimony. For I say that I have received and you admit that I have received; we both assert that I am secure. What then are you promising me? Why do you want to make me a Catholic when you are not going to give me anything more and you admit that I have already received what you say you have? But when I say, 'Come to me,' I declare that you do, who admit that I do have, do not have. Why do you say, 'Come to me'?"

14. The dove teaches us. For he answers from above the Lord's head and says, "You have baptism, but the love with which I moan you do not have." "What does this mean," he says, "I have baptism but I do not have love? Do I have the sacraments and not love?" Do not shout. Show me how he has love who divides unity. "I," he says, "have baptism." You do, but that baptism without love profits you nothing, because without love you are nothing.<sup>40</sup> For that baptism, even in him who is nothing, is not nothing; for that baptism is something, and something great on account of him about whom it was said, "He it is who baptizes."

(2) But that you might not think that that which is great could somehow benefit you if you are not in unity, the dove descended upon him baptized, as if saying, "If you have baptism, be in the dove lest what you have may not benefit you."

(3) Come therefore to the dove, we say, not that you may begin to have what you did not have, but that what you had

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he agrees with the Donatists and with Cyprian that there is no salvation outside the Church in that effectiveness of baptism (and the other sacraments) depends upon communion with the Church. See Augustine, *De Baptismo*, 1 and 3 (PL 43.107-126 and 139-154; and CSEL 51.145-173 and 196-222); Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 877-880; and F. Dillistone, "The Anti-Donatist Writings," *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. R. Battenhouse (New York, 1955), 194-197, 199-201.

40. Cf. 1 Cor 13.2 and sections 22 and 23 of this *Tractate*.

may begin to benefit you. For, outside,<sup>41</sup> you had baptism to your ruin; if you have it within, it begins to benefit for salvation.

15. For baptism was not merely not beneficial to you, but not injurious also. Even holy things can injure; for in good men holy things exist for their salvation, but in evil men for their judgment. For surely, brothers, we know what we receive, and what we receive is, indeed, holy, and no one says that it is not holy. And what does the Apostle say? "For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself."<sup>42</sup> He does not say that the thing is evil, but that that evil man, by receiving evilly, receives the good which he receives for judgment. For the morsel of bread which was handed over to Judas by the Lord was not evil, was it?<sup>43</sup> Far from it. The physician would not give poison; the physician gave health. But by receiving unworthily, he who received it without peace received to his ruin.

(2) So, then, it is the same for him who is baptized. "I have it," he says, "for myself." I admit, you have it. Consider what you have; by that very thing which you have you will be condemned. Why? Because you have what belongs to the dove outside the dove.<sup>44</sup> If you have what belongs to the dove within the dove, you have it securely. Suppose you are a soldier. If you should have the mark<sup>45</sup> of your general within [the army], you serve as a soldier securely. If you have it outside [the army], not only does that mark not benefit you for military service, but you will also be punished as a deserter.

41. I.e., outside the Catholic church and within the Catholic church.

42. Cf. 1 Cor 11.29.

43. Cf. Jn 13.26.

44. Christ always gives baptism, but it is also a possession of the Church, as the Church is the spouse of Christ; see *De Baptismo* 1.15.23 (PL 43.121–122; and CSEL 51.167–168) and Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 881–882. Cf. section 16. A soldier belongs to both the king through whose power he is commissioned and the army into which he is commissioned; once he is commissioned, he is a soldier but he can only operate effectively as a soldier in the army.

45. In the later Empire the Roman soldier upon induction was given two means of identification, the *signaculum*, a seal worn on a chain about the neck, and the *character*, a brand, normally on the back of the right hand. The latter

(3) Come, then, come, and do not say, "I already have, already my need is sufficiently met." Come, the dove calls you, she calls you with her moaning. My brothers, I say to you, call with moaning, not with brawling; call with prayer, call with invitation, call with fasting.<sup>46</sup> By your love let them understand that you grieve for them. I doubt not, my brothers, that, if they see your grief, they will be confounded and will be restored to life. Come then, come, fear not; fear if you do not come; rather do not fear, but lament. Come, you will rejoice if you come; indeed you will moan in the afflictions of exile, but you will rejoice in hope.<sup>47</sup> Come where the dove is, to whom it has been said, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has."<sup>48</sup>

(4) Do you see the one dove upon the head of Christ? Do you not see the tongues in the whole world? The same Spirit through the dove and the same one through the tongues. If there is the same Spirit through the dove and the same Spirit through the tongues, the Holy Spirit was given to the world, from whom you have cut yourself off so that you may cry out with the raven and not moan with the dove. Come, therefore.

16. But perhaps you are troubled and you say, "Baptized outside [the Catholic church], I fear that I am guilty because I received outside." Already you have begun to realize what must be moaned for. You speak the truth that you are guilty, not because you have received but because you have received

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was meant especially to deter desertion since the tattoo was extremely difficult to remove. See A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284-602* (Oxford, 1964) 2.616 and 649. The normal Roman terms for the military mark were *stigma* and *puncta*. See Vegetius, *Epitome Rei Militaris* 1.8 and 2.5; *Codex Theodosianus* 10.22.4; and Aetius, *Libri Medicinales* 8.12.24-26. *Character* is apparently a later synonym. See *Vulgate*, Apoc [Rv] 13.16-17; and Cassius Felix, *De Medicina* 13. This *character* is readily applicable metaphorically to the "indelible" nature of the sacraments. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani* 2.13 (PL 43.69-73; and CSEL 51.77-83). For a thorough treatment of Augustine's use of this term, especially as applied to sacramental theology, cf. N. Haring, "St. Augustine's Use of the Word *Character*," *Medieval Studies* 14 (1951), 79-97; see also Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 880-881, and Poque, 1.41-46.

46. Several codices omit the phrase "call with fasting."

47. Cf. section 2.

48. Cf. Song 6.8 (NAB 6.9).

outside. Hold fast therefore what you have received; change the fact that you have received outside. You have received what belongs to the dove outside the dove. There are two things which you are hearing: you have received, and you have received outside the dove. What you have received, I approve; that you received outside, I disapprove. Hold fast, therefore, what you have received; it is not changed, but acknowledged. It is the mark of my king. I shall not be sacrilegious. I chastise the deserter; I do not change the mark.

17. Do not boast about your baptism because I say it actually is [baptism]. Look, I say, it actually is. The whole Catholic church says it actually is. The dove perceives and acknowledges and moans because you have it outside. She sees there what she acknowledges; she sees also what she should correct. It actually is [baptism]. Come. Do you boast because it actually is, and not wish to come? Well then, what about evil men who do not belong to the dove? The dove speaks to you: 'There are evil men, among whom I moan, who do not belong to my members and it is necessary that I moan among them; do they not also have what you boast that you have? And do not many drunkards have baptism? And many greedy men? And many idolaters, and what is worse, secretly?'<sup>49</sup> Do not pagans go, or at least used to go, to the idols publicly?

(2) Now Christians seek out fortune-tellers and consult astrologers secretly. And these have baptism, but the dove moans among the ravens. Why then do you rejoice because you have? You have what even an evil man has. Have humility, love, peace; have the good which you do not yet have so that the good which you do have may benefit you.

18. For what you have Simon Magus also had.<sup>50</sup> The Acts of the Apostles are witness, that canonical book which must be read each year in the Church. You know that annually during the holy season after the Passion of the Lord, that Scripture is read where it was written how the Apostle was converted and became a preacher from [having been] a persecutor,<sup>51</sup> and

49. I.e., and what is worse, they practice their idolatry secretly.

50. Cf. Acts 8.9-23.

51. Cf. Acts 9.1-30.

also where on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent, in parted tongues as of fire.<sup>52</sup> We read there that in Samaria many believed through the preaching of Philip,<sup>53</sup> and it is understood that he is either one of the apostles or one of the deacons; for we read there that seven deacons were ordained, among whom is also the name Philip.<sup>54</sup>

(2) Through Philip's preaching, therefore, the Samaritans believed; Samaria began to have an abundance of believers. The infamous Simon Magus was there; through his works of magic he had bewitched the people so that they thought he was the power of God. And yet, moved by the signs which were performed by Philip, he himself also believed; but how he believed the following passages showed.

(3) And Simon, too, was baptized. The apostles who were in Jerusalem heard this; Peter and John were sent to them and they found many baptized. And because none of them had yet received the Holy Spirit in the way in which he descended at that time, so that they, upon whom the Holy Spirit descended, might speak with tongues to provide a clear sign that the nations would believe, they laid hands on them, praying for them, and they received the Holy Spirit. That Simon, who was not a dove in the Church, but a raven, because he was seeking what was his own, not what was Jesus Christ's<sup>55</sup> and for that reason he had loved in Christians their power more than their justice—he saw that the Holy Spirit was being given through the imposition of the apostles' hands (not that they themselves were giving, but that he was given through their prayers), and he said to the apostles, "What amount of money do you wish to receive from me that the Holy Spirit may also be given through the imposition of my hands?" And Peter said to him, "May you and your money perish together, because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money."<sup>56</sup>

(4) To whom did he say "May you and your money perish together"? Why, to one baptized. He already had baptism; but

52. Cf. Acts 2.1–4.

54. Cf. Acts 6.1–6.

56. Cf. Acts 8.19–20.

53. Cf. Acts 8.4–8.

55. Cf. Phil 2.21.

he did not cling to the dove's inwardness. Hear that he did not cling. Observe the very words of the Apostle Peter when he continues, "You have no part nor lot in this faith; for I see that you are in the gall of bitterness."<sup>57</sup> The dove does not have gall; Simon did. Therefore he had been separated from the dove's inwardness. In what way did baptism benefit him?

(5) Therefore, do not boast about baptism, as if salvation through it suffices for you. Do not be angry, put aside gall, come to the dove. Here that will benefit you which, outside, not only did not benefit but also injured.

19. And don't say, "I am not coming because I was baptized outside." Look, begin to have love, begin to bear fruit; let fruit be found in you, the dove will send you inside. We find this in Scripture [when it is written], the ark had been built from incorruptible woods.<sup>58</sup> The incorruptible woods are the saints, the faithful who belong to Christ. For just as in a temple the faithful men are called the living stones of which the temple is built,<sup>59</sup> so men persevering in the faith are the incorruptible woods. In that ark, then, were incorruptible woods; for the ark is the Church.

(2) The dove baptizes there; for that ark was borne over the water. The incorruptible woods were baptized within. We find that certain woods were baptized outside, that is, all the trees which were in the world. Nevertheless the water was the same, and there was no other; it all had come from the sky and from the abysses of springs. It was the very water in which the incorruptible woods which were in the ark were baptized and in which the woods outside were baptized. The dove was sent, and at first did not find a resting place for its feet, and it returned to the ark.<sup>60</sup> For all places were filled with the waters and it preferred to return rather than to be rebaptized. But the raven was sent out before the water dried up; rebaptized, it did not wish to return, and it died in these waters.<sup>61</sup>

57. Cf. Acts 8.21–23.

58. Cf. Gn 6.14.

59. Cf. 1 Pt 2.5.

60. Cf. Gn 8.6–11.

61. But Gn 8.7 reads: "It flew to and fro until the waters had dried off the earth." Here Augustine supposes that the raven, from its failure to return to the ark, was trapped in the waters and drowned; in *Contra Faustum* 12.20

(3) May God turn away [from us] the death of that raven! For why did it not return except that it had been cut off by the waters? But the dove, not finding a resting place for its feet, although on all sides the water cried out to it, "Come, come, bathe yourself here," just as these heretics shout out, "Come, come you have [baptism] here," the dove, not finding a resting place for its feet, returned to the ark.

(4) And Noe sent it out again, as the ark sends you to speak to them. And what did the dove do after that? Because there were woods that had been baptized outside, it carried back to the ark an olive branch. That branch had both leaves and fruit.<sup>62</sup> Let there not be only words in you, let there not be only leaves in you, let there be fruit, and you return to the ark. But not through yourself, for the dove calls you back. Moan from without that you may call them back inside.

20. Now this fruit of the olive, if you should examine it, you will find out what it was. The fruit of the olive signifies love. How do we prove this? For just as olive oil is held down by no liquid but it bursts through all other liquids, springs up, and stands at the top, so too, love cannot be held down at the bottom, but it has to rise up to the top. Wherefore the Apostle says of it, "I show to you a yet more elevated way."<sup>63</sup> Because we said about olive oil that it rises to the top, and that it is really about love that the Apostle said, "I show to you a yet more elevated way," let us hear what follows: "If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."<sup>64</sup>

(2) Go now, Donatus, and shout, "I am eloquent!" Go now and shout, "I am learned!" How eloquent? How learned?

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(PL 42:264–265; and CSEL 25:348–349) he adds an alternative; that the raven was attracted by some carcass floating on the water.

62. Gn 8.11 only says that the olive branch has leaves. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 388–389, suggests that Augustine is thinking also of the barren fig tree in Mt 21.19 and distinguishing this fruitful olive from it in his own mind.

63. 1 Cor 12.31 (NAB 13.1). The Latin *supereminentiorem* is here translated "more elevated" rather than "more excellent" or "more surpassing" in an attempt to approximate the Latin play on words, since the olive oil *supereminet*, that is, "rises to the top."

64. Cf. 1 Cor 13.1.

Have you spoken with the tongues of angels? And yet if you were to speak with the tongues of angels, not having love, I would hear sounding brasses and tinkling cymbals. I seek something solid; let me find fruit among the leaves. Let there not be only words; let them have the olive, let them return to the ark.

21. But, you will say, I have the sacrament. You say the truth. The sacrament is divine; you have baptism, and I admit it. But what does the same Apostle say? "If I know all the sacraments, and have prophecy and all faith so as to move mountains,"<sup>65</sup> perhaps to prevent you from also saying, "I have believed and that is enough for me." But what does James say? "The demons also believe and tremble."<sup>66</sup> Faith is great, but it gives no benefit at all if it should lack love. Even the demons confessed Christ. Therefore by believing, not by loving, they said, "What have we to do with you?"<sup>67</sup>

(2) They had faith, they did not have love; therefore they were demons. Do not boast about faith; thus far you must be compared to the demons. Do not say to Christ, "What have I to do with you?" For the unity of Christ speaks to you. Come, learn peace, return to the dove's inwardness. You were baptized outside; have the fruit, and you return to the ark.

22. And you say, "Why do you seek us if we are evil?" That you may be good. We are seeking you for the very reason that you are evil. For if you were not evil, we should have found you, we would not be seeking you. He who is good has already been found; he who is evil is still being sought. And so we are seeking you; return to the ark. But I already have baptism. "If I know all sacraments, and have prophecy and all faith so as to move mountains, yet do not have love, I am nothing."<sup>68</sup> Let me see fruit there, let me see the olive, and you are called back to the ark.

23. But what do you say? "Look, we suffer many evils."

65. Cf. 1 Cor 13.2. With Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 393, I translate *sacramenta* as "sacraments" rather than "mysteries," as its own context requires, to fit Augustine's use of the word here.

66. Cf. Jas 2.19. I translate *daemones* as "demons" rather than "devils" to keep a Neo-Platonic flavor.

67. Mk 1.24.

68. Cf. 1 Cor 13.2.

Would that you suffered them for Christ and not for your own honors. Hear what follows. For they sometimes boast because they give many alms, they give to the poor, because they suffer vexations, but for Donatus, not for Christ! Look at how you suffer. For if you suffer for Donatus, you suffer for a proud man; you are not in the dove, if you suffer for Donatus. He was not a friend of the bridegroom; for if he were a friend of the bridegroom, he would seek the bridegroom's glory, not his own. Look at the friend of the bridegroom saying, "He it is who baptizes." That man for whom you suffer was not a friend of the bridegroom. You do not have your wedding garment; and if you have come to the feast, you will have to be sent outside.<sup>69</sup>

(2) Rather, because you have been sent outside, therefore you are unhappy; return at last, and do not boast. Hear what the Apostle says: "If I distribute all my goods to the poor, and deliver my body that I may be burnt, yet do not have love."<sup>70</sup> Look what you do not have. "If I deliver," he says, "my body that I may be burnt," and, indeed, in the name of Christ—but because there are many who do that with a boast and not with love—"If I deliver my body that I may be burnt, yet do not have love, it profits me nothing."

(3) Those martyrs who suffered in the time of persecution acted out of love; they acted out of love. But these men act out of ostentation and out of pride. For since there is no persecutor, they hurl themselves down [to a violent death].<sup>71</sup>

69. Cf. Mt 22.11–14.

70. Cf. 1 Cor 13.3.

71. Cf. Willis, 15–16: "... the dominating Donatist passion for pseudo-martyrdom by suicide, if it was impossible to seek death by legal process." This was especially characteristic of the radical Circumcellions who went so far as to celebrate the anniversaries of such "martyrs" with drunkenness and immorality. Theodoretus even relates that when such a voluntary martyrdom was imminent, invitations were sent to friends to bring food to fatten the future martyr as if a victim for an impending sacrifice. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani* 3.29 and, perhaps, 18 (PL 43.105–108 and 96; and CSEL 51.136–141 and 122–123), *Epistula ad Catholicos contra Donatistas* 19.50 (PL 43.429–430; and CSEL 52.296–298); Optatus of Milevis, 3.4 (CSEL 26.81–85); Theodoretus, *Haeticarum Fabularum Compendium* 4.6 (PG 83.423–424); Frend, *Donatist Church*, 54–55, 174–176; R. Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Oxford, 1950), 60–61; and E. Tengström, *Donatisten und Katholiken* (Goeteburg, 1964), 57–58.

Come then, that you may have love. "But we have martyrs." What martyrs? They are not doves; therefore they tried to fly and fell from the rock.

24. And so, my brothers, you see all things shout out against them, all the holy pages, all the prophecy, the whole gospel, all the apostolic letters, all the moanings of the dove; and they do not yet awaken, they do not yet bestir themselves. But if we are the dove, let us moan, let us endure, let us hope. The mercy of God will be at hand that the fire of the Holy Spirit might flame forth in your simplicity; and they will come. We must not despair.

(2) Pray, preach, love. The Lord is absolutely powerful. Already they have begun to recognize their impudence; many have recognized it, many have blushed. Christ will be present so that the rest, too, may recognize it. And certainly, my brothers, let the chaff alone remain there; let all the grain be gathered. Whatever has borne fruit there, let it return to the ark through the dove.

25. Now, failing in every point, finding nothing to say, what do they propose to us? "They have taken away our country houses, they have taken away our country estates." They adduce the wills of men.<sup>72</sup> "Look here where Gaius Seius<sup>73</sup> has given his country estate to the church over which Faustinus<sup>74</sup> presided." Of what church was Faustinus the bishop? What is the church? "To the church," he said, "over which Faustinus presided." But Faustinus presided, not over a church; rather he presided over a sect. The dove, in fact, is the Church. Why do you shout? We have not devoured country houses; let the dove have them. Let it be asked who is the dove, and let it have them. For you know, my brothers, that these country houses

72. On February 12, 405 A.D., the Emperor Honorius proclaimed an edict which interdicted the Donatists from making or receiving wills or donations. Cf. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 81–82, 398, and Frend, *Donatist Church* 263–264.

73. Gaius Seius is a fictional legal name, like the English John Doe.

74. Faustinus was a Donatist bishop at Hippo Regius at the time when Gildo was terrorizing Africa, 401–402 A.D. Cf. Augustine, *Contra Litteras Petilianus* 2.83.184 (PL 43.316; and CSEL 52.112–115); Monceaux, 4.143; and La Bonnardière, 25.

are not Augustine's; and if you do not know but think that I delight in the possession of country houses, God knows, he understands what I feel about those country houses, what I suffer over them. He knows my moanings over the fact that he has deigned to impart to me something of the dove.

(2) Look, there are country houses. By what right do you claim the country houses? By divine or by human right? Let them answer that we have divine right in the Scriptures, human right in the laws of kings. By which does each man possess what he possesses? Is it not by human right? For by divine right "the Lord's are the earth and its fullness."<sup>75</sup> The poor and the rich God made from one and the same slime; and one and the same earth supports the poor and the rich. And yet by human right he says, "This country house is mine, this city house is mine, this slave is mine." By human right, then, by the right of emperors. Why? Because God has distributed these very human rights to the human race through the kings and emperors of the world.

(3) Do you want us to read the laws of the emperors and to act according to them in regard to the country houses?<sup>76</sup> If you wish to possess by human right, let us recite the laws of the emperors; let us see if they wish anything to be possessed by heretics. "But what has the Emperor to do with me?"<sup>77</sup> It is according to his right that you possess the earth. Or take away the rights of emperors and who dares to say, "That country house is mine or that slave is mine or this city house is mine?"

(4) But if the men have received the rights of kings in order that these possessions might be kept, do you wish us to recite the laws that you might delight that you have even one garden

75. Ps 23.1.

76. The Conference of Carthage, held in 411 A.D., at the order of the Emperor Honorius and under the presidency of his *Comes*, Marcellinus, among its provisions suppressing Donatism, confiscated all Donatist property to the Catholics. This gave rise to numerous disputes such as that mentioned here. Cf. Freud, *Donatist Church*, 275-289. But see Introduction, paragraphs (40) and (41).

77. This was the famous (or infamous) response made by Donatus himself in 347 A.D. to the legates of the Emperor Constans, Paul and Macarius. Cf. Optatus of Milevis, 3.3 (CSEL 26.73); Freud, *Donatist Church*, 177-178; and Berrouard, *Homélie 1-XVI*, 882-883.

and that you may ascribe it solely to the clemency of the dove that it is even permitted you to stay there? For unmistakable laws are read wherein the emperors have instructed that those who appropriate to themselves the name of Christian outside the community of the Catholic church and do not wish to worship the author of peace in peace are to venture to possess nothing in the name of the Church.

26. "But what have we to do with the Emperor?" But I have already said, it is a question of human right. And yet the Apostle intended that kings be served, he intended that kings be honored; and he said, "Honor the king."<sup>78</sup> Do not say, "What have I to do with the king?" What then have you to do with a possession? Through the rights of kings possessions are possessed. You have said, "What have I to do with the king?" Do not mention your possessions; for you have based your claim on the very human rights by which possessions are possessed.

(2) "But I am dealing with divine Law," he says. Then let us read the gospel. Let us see how far the Catholic church is Christ's, upon whom the dove came who taught: "He it is who baptizes." How then can he possess by divine right who says, "I baptize," when the dove says, "He it is who baptizes"? When Scripture says, "One is my dove, the only one her mother has"?<sup>79</sup> Why have you torn the dove to pieces? Why, you have torn out your own intestines; for you are tearing at yourselves, the dove perseveres uninjured.

(3) Therefore, my brothers, if on every point they have nothing to say, I say what they should do: let them come to the Catholic church, and they will have together with us not only the earth, but also him who made heaven and earth.

78. 1 Pt 2.17.

79. Cf. Song 6.8 (NAB 6.9).

## TRACTATE 7

### *On John 1.34–51*

**W**E ARE DELIGHTED by the large number of you present today, especially since you have come with an eagerness far beyond what we could have hoped for. This is what brings us joy and consoles us in all the labors and dangers of this life—your love for God, your devout zeal, your firm hope, your fervor of spirit.<sup>1</sup>

(2) You heard when the Psalm was read that a poor and needy man cries out to God in this world.<sup>2</sup> For it is the voice, as you have often heard and as you ought to remember, not of one man and yet of one man. Not of one man because the faithful are many, many grains, groaning amid the chaff, scattered through the whole world; and, yet, of one man, because all are members of Christ and for this reason one body. Therefore that needy and poor people does not know how to rejoice in the world; and its grief is within, and its joy is within, where only he sees who listens to the one who moans and crowns the one who hopes.

(3) The joy of the world [is] vanity. Its coming is very eagerly awaited; and yet when it has come, it cannot be held on to. For this day which is today in this city a joyful day for the profligate, tomorrow will not even be; nor will these same men be tomorrow this which they are today. And all things pass away, and all things fly away, and like smoke they vanish.

1. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 48–53, discusses at length this group of characteristics by which, he maintains, Augustine defines the genuine Christian.

2. Cf. Ps 73.21. This verse is cited as the reference in the editions and translations; but Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 405, convincingly argues that Ps 101 is meant, the words here referring to the title of that Psalm. The reference to Ps 101 in section 6 provides firm support for this position.

(4) Woe to those who love such things! For every soul follows what it loves; all flesh is grass, and all glory of the flesh is, as it were, the flower of the grass. The grass has withered, the flower has fallen off; but the Word of the Lord remains forever.<sup>3</sup> Behold what you should love if you want to remain forever. But you had [this] to say, "How can I apprehend the Word of God?" "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."<sup>4</sup>

2. Wherefore, my dearest people, let it also be a characteristic of our need and poverty that we grieve for those who seem to themselves to have abundance. For theirs is a joy like that of madmen. And just as a madman often rejoices in his insanity, and laughs, and laments for him who is sane, so let us also, dearest people, if we have received the medicine coming from heaven, because all of us, too, were mad, as if made healthy because we do not love the things we used to love, let us moan to God over those who are still insane. For he has the power to make them healthy too.

(2) And they need to look at themselves and be displeased with themselves.<sup>5</sup> They want to seek<sup>6</sup> and yet they do not know how to look at themselves. For if they should turn their eyes upon themselves for a little, they see their own confusion. Until this happens, let our pursuits be different, let the diversions of our soul be different. Our grief is more potent than their joy. As for the number of brothers, it is hard to imagine that any of the men would have been drawn away by that celebration; but as for the number of sisters, it saddens us, and for this we find need to grieve even more, that they whom at least shame, if not fear, ought to have called back from the crowd do not, rather, hurry to the church.

(3) Let him who sees see this, and his mercy will be at hand to heal all. But we who have assembled, let us feed at the banquets of God and let his Word be our joy. For he has invited us to his gospel; and this is our food, than which nothing is sweeter, but only if one has a healthy palate in his heart.

3. Now I am quite sure that you, my beloved people, re-

3. Cf. Is 40.6-8.

4. Jn 1.14.

5. Cf. *Tractate* 3.2.

6. The codices have this in the passive, "to be looked at."

member that this gospel is being read section by section in sequence. And I think that you have not forgotten what has already been discussed, especially the more recent matters about John and the dove.<sup>7</sup> About John, of course, what new thing he, who already knew the Lord, learned about the Lord through the dove. And it was found, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, that John did, indeed, already know the Lord; but that the Lord himself was going to baptize in such a manner that he passed the power of baptizing from himself to no one, this he learned through the dove, because it had been said to him, "He upon whom you will see the Spirit descending as a dove, and remaining upon him, he it is who baptizes in the Holy Spirit."<sup>8</sup>

(2) What is "he it is"? Not another, although through another. But why through the dove?<sup>9</sup> Many words have been said, and neither am I able nor is it necessary to repeat them all; but it was mainly because of peace;<sup>10</sup> for the dove, because it found fruit on them, brought to the ark even the woods which were baptized outside. As you recall, the dove was sent out by Noe from the ark,<sup>11</sup> which was floating on the flood waters and was being washed by baptism, but not submerged. When, therefore, the dove was sent out, it brought an olive branch and it had not only leaves but it also had fruit. And this must be our wish for our brothers who are baptized outside, that they have fruit; the dove will not leave them alone outside until she has led them back to the ark.

(3) But the whole fruit is love, without which man is nothing, whatever else he has. And we have stated and recalled that this was most richly said by the Apostle. For he said, "If I should speak with the tongues of men and angels, but should not have love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I have all knowledge, and should know all sac-

7. I.e., in *Tractates* 5 and 6.

8. Jn 1:33.

9. That is, why did John learn this through the dove?

10. Or perhaps, with Browne, 104, "reconciliation" or "concord," a more specific Christian connotation of *pax* to fit the context of bringing those outside back inside the Church. "Peace" is the generic Christian Latin term.

11. Cf. Gn 8:8-11.

raments, and should have all prophecy, and have all faith" (but in what sense did he say all faith?) "so as to remove mountains, yet should not have love, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my goods to the poor, and if I deliver my body that I may be burned, yet should not have love, it profits me nothing."<sup>12</sup> But in no way can they say that they have love who divide unity. These things were said; let us see what follows.

4. "John gave testimony," because he saw. What testimony did he give? "That he was the Son of God." Therefore, it was necessary that he baptize, who was the only Son of God, not an adopted [son]. The adopted sons, they are the ministers of the only Son; the only Son has power, the adopted sons, ministry. Should we grant that a minister, who does not belong to the number of sons, because he lives an evil life and does evil deeds, baptize, what consoles us? "He it is who baptizes."

5. "The next day again John was standing there, and two of his disciples. And looking upon Jesus as he walked by, he says, 'Behold the Lamb of God.'" Indeed he is a Lamb, but in the singular; for the disciples were also called lambs: "Behold, I am sending you like lambs in the midst of wolves."<sup>13</sup> They were also called the light: "You are the light of the world."<sup>14</sup> But in a different sense from him about whom it was said, "It was the true light that enlightens every man who comes into this world."<sup>15</sup> So, also, Lamb in the singular,<sup>16</sup> he alone without stain, without sin; not one whose stains were wiped away, but who had no stain.<sup>17</sup>

(2) For why was it that John said about the Lord, "Behold the Lamb of God"? Was John himself not a lamb? Was he not a holy man? Was he not friend of the bridegroom? Therefore in the singular, that one said, he is the Lamb of God, because solely by the blood alone of this Lamb could men be redeemed.

6. My brothers, if we recognize that the price of our ransom is the blood of the Lamb, who are they who today celebrate

12. Cf. 1 Cor 13.1-3.

13. Cf. Mt 10.16; Lk 10.3.

14. Mt 5.14.

15. Jn 1.9.

16. The true light is singular, "It was," as opposed to the light of this world which is plural, "You are."

17. Cf. *Tractates* 3.12 and 4.10.

the feast of the blood of some woman or other?<sup>18</sup> And how ungrateful are they? A golden earring was snatched, they say, from the ear of the woman, and blood ran; and the gold was placed on a balance or on a scale, and the blood far outweighed it. If the woman's blood had weight to outbalance gold, what weight has the blood of the Lamb to outbalance the world, through whom it was made?

18. This goddess, in whose honor a feast was being celebrated on this Sunday in commemoration of a miracle which occurred when her statue was violated, is still unidentified, as is the Pilleatus mentioned a few lines later. Some have thought that Cybele and Atthis are referred to here and that the *festivitas sanguinis* was the *dies sanguinis* of the Roman festival in honor of Cybele, March 24.

La Bonnardiére, 46–50, argues for this identification. She maintains that the feast of Cybele had evolved and, hence, the differences between the traditional celebration and that described here can be accounted for. She also cites Augustine's description of his own youthful participation in ceremonies in honor of Cybele in *De Civitate Dei* 2.4 as supporting the identification; but Augustine there talks of a bathing of the goddess before an assembly of both sexes whereas this festival has to do with the shedding of blood and is for women only. Also her references to Firmicus Maternus and Ambrosiaster who contrast the *dies sanguinis* with the shedding of the blood of the Lamb are wholly inadequate to support the identification of this feast with that of Cybele.

Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 883–884, points out that only blood is common to both feasts and even in this regard there is an essential difference; the blood here, from the ear, is concerned with redemption whereas the blood of the *castrati* and in the self-mutilation of Atthis concerned expiation. He furthermore points out that this is a one day feast and the festival of Cybele lasted from March 15 to 27.

M. Le Landais, "Une fête païenne à Hippone," in *Deux années de prédication de saint Augustin*, 67–72, suggests the Carthaginian goddess Caelestis without identifying Pilleatus, although he admits he has no evidence and that this is merely an hypothesis. Many writers identify Pilleatus with Atthis because Atthis wore the Phrygian style hat called the *pilleus*; this identification, as Berrouard, 884–885, points out, is also questionable. Other uses of the *pilleus* are found in Roman antiquity; hence Comeau, 14–16, and H. Leclercq "Pileatus," DACL 14.1.1062, identify Pilleatus with Pollux or Castor. Again such a conclusion is based on most insecure grounds.

P. Courcelle, "La littérature latine d'époque patristique," *Actes du premier congrès de Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Études Classiques* (Paris, 1951) 300, note 2, after calling this passage "une véritable énigme," gives a good summary of the problem; he does not, however, mention the view of Comeau that the *festivitas sanguinis* was a magic ritual from the ancient African people among whom the taboo of blood was widespread. We still have "une véritable énigme."

(2) And, indeed, some spirit or other was placated by the blood so that he pressed down the weight. Unclean spirits knew that Jesus Christ would come; they had heard it from the angels, they had heard it from the Prophets, they were expecting him to come. For if they were not expecting, why did they cry out, "What have we to do with you? Have you come to destroy us before the time? We know who you are, the holy one of God."<sup>19</sup> They knew that he would come, but they were unaware of the time.

(3) But what have you heard about Jerusalem in the Psalm? "For your servants have found her stones well pleasing, and they will have pity on her dust. You," it says, "arising, will have mercy on Sion; for the time has come that you pity her."<sup>20</sup> When the time came for God to show mercy, the Lamb came. What kind of Lamb is it whom the wolves fear? What kind of Lamb is it who, though killed, kills the lion? For the devil has been called a lion, going about and roaring, seeking someone to devour;<sup>21</sup> by the Lamb's blood the lion has been conquered. Behold the spectacles of Christians!

(4) And what is more, those men with the eyes of the flesh see vanity; we, with the eyes of the heart see truth. Do not think, brothers, that the Lord, our God, has sent us away without spectacles; for if there are no spectacles, why have you come together today? Look at what we have said. You have seen and shouted out; you would not shout out unless you had seen. And it is a great thing to view this through the whole world,<sup>22</sup> that is, the lion conquered by the Lamb's blood, the members of Christ snatched from the lion's teeth and joined to the body of Christ.

(5) Therefore some spirit has devised something similar to this, that his own image would be bought with blood; for he knew that one day the human race was going to be redeemed by the precious blood. For evil spirits contrive certain sem-

19. Cf. Mk 1.24; Lk 4.34; and Mt 8.29 which is the only text carrying the phrase "before the time."

20. Cf. Ps 101.14–15 (in some editions 13–14).

21. Cf. 1 Pt 5.8.

22. The Donatists, of course, see it only in Africa!

blances of honor for themselves that they may in this way deceive those who follow Christ. To such an extent, my brothers, that they themselves, who seduce through amulets, through enchantments, and through the artifices of the enemy, mingle the name of Christ in their enchantments; because they are no longer able to seduce Christians so that they may give their poisons, they add some honey so that what is bitter may lie hidden in that which is sweet<sup>23</sup> and may be drunk to ruin. To such an extent that I know that at one time the priest of that Pilleatus<sup>24</sup> used to say, "Even Pilleatus himself is a Christian." Why is this, brothers, except that Christians cannot otherwise be seduced?

7. Seek not, then, for Christ elsewhere than where Christ wanted himself to be preached to you, and in the way that he wanted to be preached to you; thus hold him fast, thus write him in your heart. He is a wall against all onslaughts and against all deceptions of the enemy. Do not fear; for he does not tempt unless he has been allowed.

(2) It is a fact that he can do nothing if he has not been allowed or sent. He is sent as an evil angel by the power who rules him; he is allowed when he seeks something. And this does not happen, brothers, except that the just may be tested and the unjust punished. What then do you fear? Walk in the Lord, your God. Be assured; you will not suffer what he does not wish you to suffer. What he allows you to suffer is the scourge of the corrector, not the punishment of the condemner. We are being instructed for an eternal inheritance, and we disdain to be scourged!

(3) My brothers, if any boy were to refuse to be beaten by

23. To one classically educated this immediately recalls Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 1.935–942; but Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 418–419, properly points out that the metaphor had become so commonplace by the time of Augustine that, given the difference in contexts, it probably does not show any Lucretian influence. One should keep in mind, however, that Augustine does frequently mention the Epicureans in his writings, and, while his knowledge perhaps comes primarily from Cicero, it seems clear from H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics* (Stockholm, 1967), 211–212, 382–383, 692, that Augustine had direct knowledge of Lucretius.

24. See note 18.

his father by slaps or scourges, would he not be called proud, a hopeless case, ungrateful for his father's discipline? And why does a human father instruct a human son? That he might not be able to lose the temporal goods which he has acquired for him, which he has gathered for him, which he does not wish him to lose, which he himself who leaves them behind could not keep forever. He does not teach a son with whom he is to co-possess, but one who is to possess after him. My brothers, if the father teaches his son [who will be] his successor, and if he teaches him that he, too, will pass through all those things just as he who was advising will pass through them, how do you wish our Father to instruct us whom we shall not succeed but to whom we shall approach and with whom we shall remain forever in an inheritance which does not decay, nor die, nor experience violent storm? And he is the inheritance and he is the Father.<sup>25</sup>

(4) Shall we possess this one, and ought we not be instructed? Let us, therefore, endure the instruction of the Father. When we have a headache, let us not run to the enchanters, to the fortune-tellers, and to useless remedies.<sup>26</sup> My brothers, shall I not lament for you? Every day I discover these things, and what am I to do? Do I not yet persuade you that for Christians hope must be put in Christ? Look, if someone for whom a remedy was made should die (for how many have died with remedies and how many have lived without remedies!), with what mien has the soul gone to God? It has lost the sign of Christ; it has received the sign of the devil. Or perhaps he may say, "I did not lose the sign of Christ." Therefore you had the sign of Christ together with the sign of the devil.

(5) Christ does not want a share but wants to possess alone what he bought. He bought at so great a price that he may be the sole possessor. You make his partner the devil to whom you had sold yourself through sin. Woe to them of a double heart<sup>27</sup> who give in their hearts part to God and part to the devil! God, angered because a part there has been given to

25. Cf. *Tractate* 2.13.

26. Cf. *Tractate* 6.17.

27. Cf. *Ecclesiasticus* (Sir) 2.14 (cf. NAB 2.12).

the devil, departs and the devil will possess the whole. Not without purpose, therefore, does the Apostle say, "Do not give place to the devil."<sup>28</sup> Let us, therefore, brothers, acknowledge the Lamb; let us acknowledge the price of our ransom.

8. "John was standing there, and two of his disciples." Behold, two of John's disciples. Because John, the friend of the bridegroom, was a man of such character, he was seeking not his own glory, but he was giving testimony to the truth. Did he wish his disciples to remain with him so they would not follow the Lord? Rather, he showed his disciples whom they were to follow. For they considered him as the Lamb, and he says, "Why are you looking at me? I am not the lamb. 'Behold, the Lamb of God!'"<sup>29</sup> And how does the Lamb profit us? "Behold," he says, "he who takes away the sin of the world."<sup>30</sup> And when they heard this, the two who were with John followed him.

9. Let us see the following [verses]. "Behold, the Lamb of God." John says this. "And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. But Jesus turned around, and seeing them following him, he says to them, 'What do you seek?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which interpreted means "Master") 'where do you dwell?'"

(2) They were not following him in such a way as that they would adhere to him now; for it is clear when they adhered to him, for he called them from a boat. For among these two there was Andrew as you just now heard.<sup>31</sup> But Andrew was the brother of Peter, and we know in the gospel that the Lord called Andrew and Peter from a boat, saying, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."<sup>32</sup> And from that day they adhered to him so that they did not depart. Therefore, as to the fact that these two follow him now, they do not follow as if they will not depart; but they wanted to see where he lived and to do what was written: "Let your foot wear away his

28. Eph 4.27.

29. Jn 1.29.

30. Ibid.

31. I.e., in Jn 1.40 from the reading for this *Tractate*.

32. Cf. Mt 4.19; Mk 1.17; cf. also Lk 5.1-11.

doorstep; rise to come to him continually and to learn his precepts."<sup>33</sup>

(3) He showed them where he was staying; they came and were with him. What a happy day they spent, what a happy night! Who is there who can say to us what they learned from the Lord? Let us, also, ourselves build in our heart and make a house where he may come and teach us; let him converse with us.

10. "'What do you seek?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which interpreted means "Master") 'where do you dwell?' He says to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day. Now it was about the tenth hour." Do we think that it was not at all important for the Evangelist to tell us what hour it was? Is it possible that he wanted us to notice nothing there, to seek nothing? It was the tenth hour. This number signifies the Law; for the Law was given in Ten Commandments. But the time had come that the Law be fulfilled through love because it could not be fulfilled by the Jews through fear. Wherefore the Lord says, "I have not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill."<sup>34</sup> Rightly therefore did these two follow him at the tenth hour as witness for the friend of the bridegroom; and rightly at the tenth hour he heard "Rabbi," which is interpreted "Master."

(2) If the Lord heard "Rabbi" at the tenth hour and the number ten pertains to the Law, the master of the Law is no other than the giver of the Law. Let no one say that one gave the Law and another teaches the Law; he himself teaches it who gave it. He is the master of his Law and teaches it. And there is mercy on his tongue, and so he teaches the Law mercifully, as was said about wisdom, "But she carries on her tongue the Law and mercy."<sup>35</sup> Do not fear that you cannot fulfill the Law; flee to mercy. If it is important to you to fulfill the Law, use that covenant, use the bond, use the petitions which the heavenly jurist established and composed for you.

33. Cf. Ecclus (Sir) 6.36–37.

34. Mt 5.17.

35. Cf. Prv 31.26.

11. For they who have a case and wish to plead before the emperor seek out some learned jurist by whom their petitions may be composed for them, lest, perhaps, if they plead otherwise than they ought, they not only may not get what they ask, but also may receive<sup>36</sup> a punishment instead of a benefit. And so when the apostles were seeking to pray and found no way in which to approach God the emperor, they said to Christ, "Lord, teach us to pray."<sup>37</sup> That is you, our jurist, God's counselor, rather, his fellow judge, compose petitions for us. And the Lord taught them from the book of the heavenly Law; he taught them how to pray.

(2) And in that which he taught them he put a certain provision: "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors."<sup>38</sup> If you do not ask according to the Law, you will be culpable. Having become culpable, do you tremble before the emperor? Offer the sacrifice of humility; offer the sacrifice of mercy. Say in your petitions, "Forgive me because I, too, forgive." But if you say [it], do [it].

(3) For what will you do, where will you go, if you lie in your petitions? You will not, as is said in the forum, lose the benefit of the rescript,<sup>39</sup> but you will not even obtain a rescript. For it is a principle of forensic law that what one has obtained may not benefit him who has lied in his petitions. But this is the situation among men; for a man can be deceived. The Emperor could have been deceived when you have sent him petitions; for you have said what you wanted, and he to whom you have said it doesn't know whether it is true.

(4) He has sent you down to be refuted by your adversary so that, if you were convicted of a lie before the judge, because he was not to grant it, not knowing whether you lied, you will lose the very benefit of the rescript there where you took the rescript. But God, who knows whether you lie or tell the truth, does not effect a loss of benefit for you in the judgment;

36. Some codices have "may deserve" instead of "may receive."

37. Lk 11.1.

38. Mt 6.12.

39. The "rescript," *rescriptum*, was an emperor's official response to anyone seeking an opinion or some advice from him.

but he does not even allow you to obtain it because you dared to lie to truth.<sup>40</sup>

12. What then are you going to do? Tell me. To fulfill the Law in every particular so that you offend in none is difficult; guilt, therefore, is certain. Don't you want to use the remedy? Look, my brothers, at the kind of remedy which the Lord has set up against the illnesses of the soul. What then? When you have a headache, we commend you if you put the gospel by your head and do not hurry to an amulet. For human frailty has come to this, and men who hurry to amulets must be so lamented that we rejoice when we see that a man, confined to his bed, is tossed by fever and pain and yet has placed no hope anywhere else except that he put the gospel by his head, not because the gospel was made for this but because it has been preferred to amulets. Therefore, if it is put by the head so that a headache may be eased, is it not put by the heart that the heart may be healed of its sins? Let it be done, then.

(2) Let what be done? Let it be put by the heart; let the heart be healed. It is a good thing, a good thing, that you do not fuss about the body's health, except that you ask for health from God. If he knows that it is for your advantage, he will give it; if he has not given it, it would not be advantageous for you to have it. How many lie sick in bed and are innocent; and yet, should they be healthy, they go out to commit crimes? For how many is health a disadvantage? The robber who goes to a narrow pass to kill a man, how much better would it be for him to be sick! He who rises up at night to dig through another man's wall, how much better would it be for him if he were tossed by fever! He would be ill with greater innocence; he is healthy and wicked.

(3) God, then, knows what is profitable for us; let us aim

40. Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 885–886, cites Sermon 114.5 (PL 38.654) as a parallel text which clarifies the obscurities of this sentence: "... from the emperor one may obtain a request based on a lie; when the lie is found out, the benefit will be lost and the liar punished. But from God, because he is both our advocate who gives the words of our request, and a witness of the truth or falsity of those words upon our lips, and our judge, we shall not even receive our request, much less lose the benefit of it."

only at this, that our heart may be healthy [and unaffected] by sin. And when, perchance, we are scourged in our body, let us pray to him for relief. The Apostle Paul asked him to take away the sting in his flesh, and he did not want to take it away. Was Paul disturbed? Did he gloomily say that he had been abandoned? Rather, he said that he had not been abandoned because that which he wanted to be taken away was not taken away in order that weakness might be healed. For he found this in the words of the physician: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."<sup>41</sup>

(4) Therefore, how do you know that God does not want to heal you? To be scourged is still profitable to you. How do you know how rotten is that which the physician, in guiding the knife through rottenness, cuts away? Does he not know the method, what he should do, how much he should do? Do the wailings of the one who is being cut draw back the hands of the physician who is skillfully cutting? The one cries out; the other cuts. Is he cruel who doesn't pay attention to the one shouting, or rather merciful, because he keeps after the wound that he may heal the sick man?

(5) Therefore, my brothers, I have said these things that no one may seek anything except the aid of God when perhaps we are involved in some reproof of the Lord. See that you are not lost; see that you not withdraw from the Lamb and be devoured by the lion.

13. We have said, then, why it was the tenth hour; let us see the following [verses]: "Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who had heard John and had followed him. He finds his brother Simon and says to him, 'We have found the Messiah (which interpreted is "Christ").'" In Hebrew the word is *Messiah*; in Greek, the word is *Christ*; in Latin, *the Anointed*. For he is called Christ from anointing. *Chrisma* is "anointing" in Greek; therefore *Christus* [is] "the Anointed." He is uniquely "the Anointed," "the especially Anointed."

(2) Hear how he speaks in the Psalm: "Therefore God, your

<sup>41</sup> 2 Cor. 12.9.

God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.”<sup>42</sup> For all holy men are his fellows, but he is uniquely the holy of holy men, uniquely anointed, uniquely the Christ.

14. “And he led him to Jesus. But Jesus, looking upon him, said, ‘You are Simon, the son of John; you shall be called Cephas’ (which is interpreted “Peter”).” It is not a great thing that the Lord said whose son he was. What is great to the Lord? He knew all the names of his saints whom he predestined before the constitution of the world. And do you wonder that he said to one man, “You are that one’s son and you will be called that”? Is it a great thing that he changed his name and made him Peter from Simon? Now Peter is from the word for rock,<sup>43</sup> but the rock is the Church. Therefore, in the name of Peter the Church was represented. And who is secure if not he who builds upon a rock? And what says the Lord himself?

(2) “Who hears these my words and does them, I shall liken him to a wise man who builds upon rock” (he does not give in to temptation). “And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it did not fall, for it was founded on rock. Who hears my words and does not do them” (let each and every one of us fear and beware), “I shall liken him to a foolish man who built his house on sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and its downfall was great.”<sup>44</sup> He who wishes to build upon sand, what does it profit him that he enters the Church? For by hearing and not doing, he builds, yes, but upon sand. For if he hears nothing, he builds nothing; but if he hears, he builds. But where, we ask. For if he hears and does, upon rock; if he hears and does not do, upon sand. Those who build are of two types: either [builders] upon rock or [builders] upon sand.

(3) What, then, of those who do not hear? Are they secure? Does he say they are secure because they build nothing? They are exposed under the rains, before the winds, before the

42. Cf. Ps 44.8.

43. The Latin word for “rock” is *petra*.

44. Cf. Mt 7.24–27; Lk 6.47–49.

floods; when these have come, they carry those men away before they throw down the houses. Therefore, there is only one security: both to build, and to build upon rock. If you wish to hear and not do, you build, but you build a ruin; when temptation comes, moreover, it throws down the house and carries you off together with your ruin. But if you do not hear, you are exposed; you are yourself dragged down by those temptations. Hear, then, and do; it is the one remedy.

(4) How many men, today, perhaps, by hearing and not doing have been swept away by the torrent of this celebration? For by hearing and not doing, the torrent, this annual festivity itself, has come; its stream has been filled, and it will pass by and dry up. But woe to that man whom it has carried away! Therefore, my beloved people, know that, unless a man both hear and do, he does not build upon rock; he has no part in so great a name which the Lord has so commended.

(5) For he has drawn your attention. For, if Peter had this name before, you would not in that case see the mystery of the rock, and you would think that he was called that name before by chance, not by the providence of God. Thus he wished him to be called another name first, so that from the very change of name the vital force of the mystery might be commended.

15. "And on the next day he wanted to set out for Galilee, and he finds Philip. He says to him, 'Follow me.' Now he was from the town of Andrew and Peter. And Philip finds Nathanael." (Philip has already been called by the Lord.) "And he said to him, 'We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets wrote, Jesus, the son of Joseph.'" He was called the son of him to whom his mother had been betrothed.<sup>45</sup> For that he had been conceived and born with her virginity undefiled, all Christians know well from the gospel. Philip said this to Nathanael; he also added the place, "of Nazareth. And Nathanael said to him, 'Something good can come out of Nazareth.'" What is meant, brothers? Not as some express it; for it is usual for it to be expressed, "Can anything

45. Cf. Mt 1.18.

good come out of Nazareth?"<sup>46</sup> For the words of Philip follow and say, "Come and see."

(2) But that phrase can follow both expressions, whether you express it as if asserting "Something good can come out of Nazareth," and he, "Come and see." Or whether [you express it] thus, as if in doubt and wholly questioning, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Come and see." And so, since whether it were expressed this way or that, the following words would not be incompatible, it is our task to find out which expression we should preferably understand in these words.

16. What sort of man Nathanael was we demonstrate in the following [verses]. Hear what he was, for the Lord himself bears witness. Great [is] the Lord, acknowledged by the witness of John; blessed [is] Nathanael, acknowledged by the witness of truth. For, even if the Lord were not commended by the witness of John, he himself bore witness for himself; for the truth suffices for itself for its own witness. But because men were not able to grasp the truth, they sought the truth through a lamp; and therefore John, through whom the Lord would be pointed out, was sent.<sup>47</sup>

(2) Hear the Lord bearing witness to Nathanael: "And Nathanael said to him, 'Something good can come out of Nazareth.' Philip says to him, 'Come and see.' And Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and says to him, 'Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile.'" Great witness! This was said neither to Andrew, nor was it said to Peter, nor to Philip, what was said to Nathanael. "Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile."

17. What do we make of it then, brothers? Ought he to have been first among the Apostles? Not only is he not found to

46. Here again, as in Jn 1.3-4, arises an ambiguity from the lack of systematic punctuation in ancient manuscripts; see *Tractate* 1.16 and note 38. The same position on the punctuation of this sentence and the same interpretation of this section of John's Gospel are found in *En in Ps* 65.4 (CCL 39.841).

47. Cf. *Tractate* 2.5-7.

be first among the Apostles, but Nathanael is neither in the middle nor last among the Twelve, Nathanael, to whom the Son of God bore such great witness, saying, "Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile."

(2) Is the reason asked? As far as the Lord makes known, we find a probable answer. For we ought to understand that Nathanael himself was educated and skilled in the Law; therefore the Lord did not wish to place him among the disciples because he chose unlearned men whereby he might confound the world. Hear the Apostle saying this, "For see," he says, "your own call, brethren, that there were not many mighty, not many noble. But the weak things of the world has God chosen that he may confound the strong, and the base things of the world and the despised has God chosen, and the things that are not, as though they were things that are, that he may bring to naught the things that are."<sup>48</sup>

(3) If a learned man were chosen, perhaps he would say that he has been chosen for the very reason that his learning deserved to be chosen. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, wishing to break the necks of the proud, sought not a fisherman through an orator, but from a fisherman he won an emperor. The great Cyprian was an orator, but before him Peter was a fisherman through whom later not only the orator but also the emperor would believe. No one noble was chosen at first, no one learned, because God chose the weak things of the world that he might confound the strong. Therefore that man was great and without guile; and he was not chosen for this reason alone, namely, so that the Lord might not seem to anyone to have chosen the learned.

(4) And he was coming because of that very knowledge of the Law, because when he heard "of Nazareth" (for he had examined the Scriptures thoroughly, and he knew that the Savior was to be expected from there, a thing which the other scribes and Pharisees found it hard to learn)—therefore this man, most learned in the Law, when he heard Philip saying, "We found him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets

48. Cf. 1 Cor 1.26-28.

wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph," he who knew the Scriptures very well, when he heard the name Nazareth, was aroused to hope, and he said, "Something good can come out of Nazareth."

18. Now let us see the rest about him. "Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile." What does it mean, "in whom there is no guile"? Perhaps he had no sin? Perhaps he was not sick? Perhaps that physician was not needed? Far from it. No one has been born here in such a condition that he does not need that physician. What, then, is the meaning of "in whom there is no guile"? Let us examine it a little more attentively; it will soon be clear, in the name of the Lord.

(2) The Lord says *dolus* (i.e., "guile"). And everyone who understands Latin knows that there is *dolus* when one thing is done, but another is feigned. Pay attention, my beloved people. *Dolus* is not *dolor* (i.e., "pain").<sup>49</sup> I say this because many brothers, somewhat less knowledgeable in Latinity, so speak that they say *dolus* is tormenting someone, for that which is *dolor*. *Dolus* is deceit; it is pretense. When someone covers up something in his heart and says another thing, that is *dolus*, and, if he has two hearts, he has, as it were, one fold in the heart where he sees the truth and another fold where he conceives a lie. And that you may know that this is *dolus*, it was said in the Psalms, "Guileful lips."<sup>50</sup> What does it mean, "guileful lips"? There follows, "In the heart and the heart they spoke evils." What does "in the heart and the heart" mean except in a double heart?

(3) If, therefore, guile was not in him, the physician judged him curable, not healthy. For healthy is one thing, healable<sup>51</sup> another, unhealable yet another. He who is sick but has hope

49. This is not an uncommon type of confusion in vulgar Latin. The analogy at work is probably as follows: as the root *corpor-* has the nominative *corpus*, so the root *dolor-* must have the nominative *dolus*, in spite of gender.

50. Cf. Ps 11.3. In *En in Ps* 11.3 (CCL 38.83) Augustine says that the fact that the Psalm says twice "in a heart and a heart" signifies a double heart. See ACW 29.149.

51. There is a word play here that is difficult to translate. The Latin word *sanus*, "healthy," has the same root as *sanabilis*, "curable," i.e., "able to be healthy," and *insanabilis*, "incurable," i.e. "unable to be healthy."

is called healable; he who is healthy already doesn't need a physician. Therefore the physician who had come to heal saw that he was healable because there was no guile in him.

(4) How was there no guile in him? If he is a sinner, he admits that he is a sinner. For, if one is a sinner and says that he is just, there is guile in his mouth. Therefore in Nathanael he commended the confession of sin; he did not judge him not to be a sinner.

19. Therefore when the Pharisees, who seemed to themselves to be just, were scolding the Lord, because as a physician he was mingling with the sick, and were saying, "Look with whom he is eating, with publicans and sinners," the physician answered the madmen, "The healthy do not need a physician, but they who are sick. I have come to call, not the just, but sinners."<sup>52</sup> That is to say, because you say you are just when you are sinners, because you proclaim<sup>53</sup> yourselves healthy when you are ill, you reject medicine but do not maintain your health. Thus that Pharisee who had invited the Lord to lunch thought himself healthy.<sup>54</sup> But that sick woman burst into the house where she had not been invited and, made shameless by her longing for health,<sup>55</sup> approached not the Lord's head, nor his hands, but his feet. She washed them with her tears, dried them with her hair, kissed them, anointed them with ointment, and the sinful woman made peace with the feet of the Lord.

(2) But that man, as though healthy, that Pharisee who was reclining there reproached the physician and said to himself, "This man, were he a prophet, would know what manner of woman had touched his feet."<sup>56</sup> And so he had suspected that the Lord did not know because he did not rebuff her so that he might not be touched by unclean hands. But he knew;

52. Cf. Mt 9. 11-13; Lk 15. 1-2.

53. The Maurist edition, and Migne, following it, both read "judge" for "proclaim."

54. Cf. Lk 7. 36-50.

55. In Christian Latin the word *salus* carries both the secular connotation, "health," and the religious connotation, "salvation," thus possessing a rich double meaning which neither English word can convey in itself.

56. Cf. Lk 7. 39.

he allowed himself to be touched so that the touch itself might heal.

(3) The Lord, seeing the heart of the Pharisee, related a parable: “‘A certain moneylender had two debtors; the one owed him fifty denarii, the other, five hundred. As they had no means of paying, he forgave them both. Which one loved him more?’ And he said, ‘I suppose, Lord, the one to whom he forgave more.’ And having turned to the woman, he said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I entered into your house; you did not give<sup>57</sup> me water for my feet; but she washed my feet with tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss; she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You gave me no oil; she has anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say to you, Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved much; but he to whom little is forgiven loves little.’”<sup>58</sup> This is to say, You are more sick,<sup>59</sup> but you think you are healthy; you think little is forgiven you although you owe more. She, because there was no guile in her, well deserved her medicine. What is this, there was no guile in her? She admitted her sins.

(4) This also he praises in Nathanael, that there was no guile in him; for many Pharisees who abounded in sins said they were just and brought guile [with them] on account of which they could not be healed.

20. And so he saw him in whom there was no guile, and said, “‘Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile.’ Nathanael says to him, ‘Where do you know me from?’ Jesus answered and said, ‘Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig, I saw you.’” That is, under the fig tree. “Nathanael answered him and said, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel.’”

(2) This Nathanael could understand something great in that which was said, “When you were under the fig tree, I saw

57. The CCL Latin text reads *ardisti*, an unexampled Latin verb that one may well suspect is a typist's error undetected by the editor since both the Maurist and the Migne texts give the *dedisti* of the *Vulgate* text and no evidence of any manuscript variants. The reading *dedisti* is adopted in this translation.

58. Cf. Lk 7:41–47.

59. Sc., than she is.

you, before Philip called you." For he made such a statement, "You are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel," as Peter did at a considerably later time when the Lord said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood has not revealed it to you, but my Father who is in heaven."<sup>60</sup> And there he named him rock and praised the support of the Church in this faith. This man now says, "You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel." Why? Because it was said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

21. It must be asked whether that fig tree signifies anything. Hear him, my brothers. "We found a fig tree, cursed because it had only leaves and no fruit."<sup>61</sup> In the beginning of the human race Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, made coverings for themselves from fig leaves;<sup>62</sup> thus fig leaves are understood as sins. Now Nathanael was under the fig tree, as under the shadow of death. The Lord saw him about whom it was said, "A light has arisen for those who were sitting under the shadow of death."<sup>63</sup> What, then, was said to Nathanael? Do you say to me, O Nathanael, "Where do you know me from?" This very moment you are speaking with me because Philip called you. He saw that he, whom he had called through his apostle, already belonged to his Church. O thou Church, O thou Israel in which there is no guile! If you are the people of Israel in which there is no guile, you now, this very moment, have recognized Christ through the apostles, as Nathanael recognized Christ through Philip.

(2) But his mercy saw you before you recognized him when you were lying under sin. For did we seek Christ first, and did he not seek us? Did we sick men come to the physician, and the physician not to the sick? Had not that sheep been lost, and, leaving the ninety-nine behind, did not the shepherd seek for and find it which he joyfully carried back on his

<sup>60</sup>. Cf. Mt 16.17.

<sup>61</sup>. Cf. Mt 21.19, Mk 11.13, and Lk 13.6; Augustine's quotation corresponds to no one of these.

<sup>62</sup>. Cf. Gn 3.7.

<sup>63</sup>. Cf. Is 9.2 (NAB 9.1).

shoulders?<sup>64</sup> Had not that drachma been lost, and did not the woman light a lamp and seek for it in her whole house until she found it?<sup>65</sup> And when she found it, she said to her neighbors, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma which I lost." So, too, we, like the sheep, had been lost; like the drachma, we had been lost. And our shepherd found the sheep, but sought for the sheep. The woman found the drachma, but sought for the drachma.

(3) What is the woman? The flesh of Christ. What is the lamp? "I have prepared a lamp for my anointed."<sup>66</sup> Therefore we were sought in order that we might be found; having been found, we speak. Let us not be proud because, before we were found, if we were not sought for, we would have been lost. Therefore let not those whom we love and whom we wish to win over to the peace of the Catholic church say to us, "Why do you want us? Why do you seek us if we are sinners?"<sup>67</sup> We seek you precisely that you may not be lost; we seek you because we were sought; we wish to find you because we were found.

22. And so when Nathanael had said, "Where do you know me from?" the Lord said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." O thou Israel without guile, whoever you are, O people living by faith, before I called you through my apostles, when you were under the shadow of death and you did not see me, I saw you.

(2) Then the Lord said to him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, you believe. A greater thing than these you will see." What does this mean, "A greater thing than these you will see"? "And he says to him, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'"

(3) Brothers, I have said something greater than "I saw you under the fig tree." For it is a more considerable thing that the Lord has justified us after we have been called than that he saw us lying under the shadow of death. For what profit

64. Cf. Lk 15.4-7.

66. Cf. Ps 131.17; *Tractate* 5.14.

65. Cf. Lk 15.8-9.

67. Cf. *Tractate* 6.22.

would it be for us if we had remained there where he saw us? Would we not be lying there? What is this greater thing? When did we see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man?

23. I had already spoken once about these angels ascending and descending.<sup>68</sup> But, in case you may have forgotten, I speak briefly, to recall it to your minds; for I would say more if I were not recalling, but just beginning.

(2) In a dream Jacob saw a ladder and on this ladder he saw angels ascending and descending; and he anointed the stone which he had placed at his head.<sup>69</sup> You have heard that the Messiah is the Christ; you have heard that the Christ is the Anointed.<sup>70</sup> For he did not place the anointed stone so that he might come and adore it; otherwise it would be idolatry and not a representation of Christ. Therefore a representation was made, so far as a representation needed to be made, and Christ was represented. The stone was anointed, but not so as to make an idol. The stone was anointed. Why a stone? "Behold, I lay in Sion a chosen stone, precious; and he who believes in it shall not be confounded."<sup>71</sup> Why anointed? Because [the name] "Christ" [is derived] from [the word] *chrīisma*.

(3) But what did he see that time on the ladder? Angels ascending and descending. So also is the Church, brothers: the angels of God, good preachers, preaching Christ; that is, they ascend and descend upon the Son of man. How do they ascend, and how do they descend? From one we have an example. Hear the Apostle Paul; what we find in him, let us believe also about the rest of the preachers of truth.

(4) See Paul ascending: "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows) was caught up to the third heaven, and heard unutterable words which it is not granted to man to speak."<sup>72</sup> You heard him ascending; hear him descending: "I

68. Perhaps he is referring to *En in Ps* 119.2 (CCL 40.1777–1779) which had been delivered prior to the *Tractates on John*.

69. Cf. Gn 28.10–22.

70. In section 13 of this *Tractate*.

71. Cf. 1 Pt 2.6, quoting Is 28.16.

72. Cf. 2 Cor 12.2–4.

could not speak to you as spiritual men but only as carnal, as to little ones in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food.”<sup>73</sup> Look, he who had ascended descended. Seek where he had ascended: “Up to the third heaven.” Seek where he had descended: To giving milk to little ones. Hear that he descended: “I became a little one,” he says, “in your midst, as if a nurse were fondling her own children.”<sup>74</sup>

(5) For we see both nurses and mothers descend to little ones; and though they know how to speak Latin, they clip their words and somehow switch their speech so that they may be able to compose childish cajoleries from eloquent language; for if they should speak correctly, the infant does not hear with understanding but neither does he benefit. And some eloquent father, if he should be so great an orator that his tongue thunders through the forum and rattles the magistrates’ platforms, if he should have a son, when he returns home, he puts aside the forensic eloquence by which he had ascended and with childish tongue he descends to his little one.

(6) Hear in one passage the Apostle himself ascending and descending, in one sentence: “For if,” he says, “we were transported in mind, [it was] for God; if we are in control of ourselves, [it is] for you.”<sup>75</sup> What does it mean, “We were transported in mind, [it was] for God”? That we might see “words which it is not granted to man to speak.” What does it mean, “we are in control of ourselves for you”? “Have I judged myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified?”<sup>76</sup> If the Lord himself ascended and descended, it is clear that his preachers also ascend by imitation and descend by preaching.

24. And if we have kept you a little too long, it was our intention that the troublesome hours pass by. For we think that those men<sup>77</sup> have now finished their vanity. We, however, brothers, when we have been fed by healthful banquets, let us do what remains that we might fulfill the Lord’s day solemnly

73. Cf. 1 Cor 3.1–2.

74. Cf. 1 Thes 2.7.

75. Cf. 2 Cor 5.13.

76. Cf. 1 Cor 2.2.

77. Some codices have “those women.”

in spiritual joys, and let us compare the joys of truth with the joys of vanity. And if we tremble, let us grieve; if we grieve, let us pray; if we pray, may our prayers be heard; if we are heard, we gain them too.

## TRACTATE 8

### ●n John 2.1-4



THE MIRACLE OF our Lord, Jesus Christ, by which he made wine from water is certainly no wonder for those who know that God did it. For he, the very one who every year does this on vines, made wine on that day at the wedding in those six water jars, which he ordered to be filled with water. For just as what the attendants put into the water jars was turned into wine by the Lord's effort so also what the clouds pour down is turned into wine by the effort of the same Lord. But that does not amaze us because it happens every year; by its regularity it has lost its wonderment.<sup>1</sup> Yet it merits even greater reflection than that which was done in the water jars.

(2) For who is there who reflects upon the works of God, by which this whole world is governed and managed, and is not struck dumb and overwhelmed by miracles? If he should reflect upon the power of one grain of any seed at all, it is a great thing, an awe, to the one reflecting [upon it]. But, because men, concentrating upon something else, have abandoned reflection upon the works of God in which they might give praise to the creator every day, God has saved for himself, as it were, certain extraordinary things to do so that by amazing events he might arouse men, as if they were asleep, to worship him. A dead man arose; men were astonished. Every day

1. The Latin phrase, *assiduitate amisit admirationem*, both displays Augustine's rhetorical quality with its aphoristic compactness, alliteration, and assonance, and also bears a strong resemblance to a passage in Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 2.96, where a similar idea, similar vocabulary, and similar alliteration occur. On the grain of seed just below, see Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, 2.81. Neither of these references are cited in M. Testard, *St. Augustin et Cicéron* (Paris, 1958) or Hagendahl's *Augustine and the Latin Classics*.

many are born and no one is amazed. If we were to reflect more wisely, it is a greater miracle that one who was not is, than that he who was comes back to life.

(3) And yet the same God, the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, does all these things through his Word; and he who created them governs them. He did the earlier miracles through his Word, God, with himself; he did the later miracles through the very same one, his Word made flesh and become man for our sake. Just as we are astonished at what was done by the man Jesus, let us be astonished at what was done by the God Jesus.

(4) By the God Jesus were made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all the adornment of the heavens, the richness of the earth, the fertility of the sea; all these things which are present to the eyes were made by Jesus God. And we see these things and, if his Spirit is in us, they please us in such a way that the maker is praised, but not so that in turning to the works we turn away from the maker, nor, so to speak, by facing the things he made, do we turn our backs to him who made them.

2. And, indeed, we do see these things and they are present to our eyes. What about those things which we do not see, such as the Angels, the Virtues, the Powers, the Dominions, and every celestial inhabitant of this creation who is not present to our eyes? Often, though, angels too, when it was necessary, have shown themselves to men. And has not God, through his Word, that is, his only Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, made all these things?

(2) What about the human soul itself, which is not seen and which shows itself in the flesh by its works and offers great wonderment to those who reflect well, by whom was it made except by God? And through whom was it made except through the Son of God? I do not yet speak about a man's soul. [See] how the soul of any beast governs its bulk! It makes use of all the senses, the eyes for seeing, the ears for hearing, the nostrils for perceiving odor, the judgment of the mouth for discriminating flavors, and, in a word, the limbs themselves for performing their duties. Does the body, and not the soul,

that is, the inhabitant of the body, do these things? And yet it is not seen by the eyes and it is from these things which it does that it arouses wonderment.

(3) Let your reflection now turn to the human soul to which God had granted intellect for discovering its creator, for discerning and distinguishing between good and evil, that is between the just and the unjust. How many things it does through the body! Observe the whole world organized in the human commonwealth itself. With what administrations, with what classifications of powers, constitutions of cities, laws, customs, arts? All this is accomplished by the soul and this power of the soul is not seen. When it is taken out of the body, a corpse lies there; but when it is in the body, it first, in some way, preserves the body from putrefaction. For all flesh is perishable and proceeds to putrefaction unless it is held back by, as it were, some preservative of the soul. The human soul has this in common with the animal soul; rather those things are to be admired which I have mentioned, which relate to mind and intellect, wherein also man is renewed in accordance with the image of his creator in accordance with whose image he was made.<sup>2</sup>

(4) What will this power of the soul be when this body has put on incorruption and this mortal body has put on immortality?<sup>3</sup> If it can do so much through corruptible flesh, what will it be able to do through a spiritual body after the resurrection of the dead? Yet this soul, as I have said, of wondrous nature and essence, is an invisible thing and able to be perceived by the mind; and yet it was made by Jesus God, because he is the Word of God. "All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing."<sup>4</sup>

3. Therefore, when we see such great things done by the God Jesus, why are we amazed that water was turned into wine by the man Jesus? For he was not made man in such a way that he lost what was God. Man was added to him; God was not lost. Therefore he who did all those things did this.

2. Cf. Col 3.10.

4. Cf. Jn 1.3.

3. Cf. 1 Cor 15.53.

(2) And so let us not be amazed that God did it; but let us be filled with love because he did it among us and did it for our renewal. For in these actions he was giving some sign to us. I think that he did not come to the wedding without a reason. The miracle apart, something mysterious and symbolic lies hidden in the very act. Let us knock that he may open and may inebriate us with invisible wine; for we, too, were water and he made us wine, he made us wise.

(3) For we are tasting the wisdom of his faith who before were unwise. And, perhaps, it belongs to this wisdom itself, with the honor of God, with the praise of his majesty, with the love of his most powerful mercy, to understand what was done in this miracle.

4. The Lord was invited and came to a wedding. What wonder if he came to that house for a wedding who came to this world for a wedding? For if he did not come for a wedding, he does not have a bride here. What is it that the Apostle said? "I have joined you to one man to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."<sup>5</sup> Why is it that he fears that the virginity of Christ's bride may be corrupted by the devil's cunning? "I fear," he says, "that as the serpent seduced Eve by his cunning, so also your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity and chastity which is in Christ."<sup>6</sup>

(2) Therefore he has a bride here whom he has redeemed by his blood and to whom he has given the Holy Spirit as a pledge.<sup>7</sup> He wrested her from enslavement to the devil, he died for her sins. He arose again for her justification.<sup>8</sup> Who will offer such great things to his bride? Men may offer some trinkets or other from the earth such as gold, silver, precious stones, horses, slaves, farms, estates. Will anyone offer his blood? For if he gives his blood to his bride, he will not be alive to take her as his wife. But the Lord, dying free of anxiety, gave his blood for her in order that when he arose, he might have her whom he had already joined to himself in the womb of the Virgin.

5. Cf. 2 Cor 11.2.

7. Cf. 2 Cor 1.22.

6. Cf. 2 Cor 11.3.

8. Cf. Rom 4.25.

(3) For the Word was the bridegroom, and human flesh was the bride; and both are the one Son of God and likewise the Son of Man. That womb of the Virgin Mary where he became the head of the Church was his bridal chamber; he came forth from there like the bridegroom from his bridal chamber, as Scripture foretold: "And he, as a bridegroom coming forth from his bridal chamber, has rejoiced as a giant to run the way."<sup>9</sup> He came forth from the bridal chamber like a bridegroom; and having been invited, he came to the wedding.

5. As an example of a definite mystery, the bridegroom seems not to acknowledge the mother from whom he came forth, and to say to her, "What is it to me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come." What does this mean? Has he come to the wedding for the purpose of teaching the disparagement of mothers? To be sure, the man to whose wedding he had come was taking a wife so as to beget sons; and, of course, by those whom he was hoping to beget he desired to be honored. Had he, then, come to the wedding to dishonor [his] mother when marriages themselves are celebrated and wives are taken for the purpose of having children whom God orders to pay honor to their parents?

(2) Beyond doubt, brothers, something lies hidden here. For it is so important a matter that certain men whom the Apostle forewarned [us] to guard against, as we have related above, when he said, "I fear that, as the serpent seduced Eve by his cunning, so also your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity and chastity which is in Christ,"<sup>10</sup> [certain men],<sup>11</sup> disparaging the gospel and saying that Jesus was not born of the Virgin Mary, try to take a proof of their error from this verse, so that they say, "How was she his mother to whom he said, 'What is it to me and to you, woman?'" Therefore they must be answered, and the question of why the Lord said this must be discussed, so that these unsound men may not think they have found something against sound faith

9. Cf. Ps 18.6.

10. Cf. 2 Cor 11.3.

11. The Manichaeans. Here he argues against their docetic teachings that Christ did not truly have a human body and that Mary was not his mother. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 893–895; and also, Widengren, 124.

whereby the chastity of the virgin bride may be corrupted, that is, whereby the faith of the Church may be defiled.

(3) For in truth, brothers, their faith is corrupted who prefer a lie to the truth. For those fellows who seem to honor Christ by denying that he had flesh declare him to be nothing other than a liar. Now those who build a lie in men, what do they drive out of them except the truth? They admit the devil; they shut out Christ. They admit the adulterer; they shut out the bridegroom. [They are] groomsmen,<sup>12</sup> sure, or rather pimps of the serpent. For they speak of this purpose, that the serpent may possess and Christ be shut out. How does the serpent possess? When a lie possesses. When falsehood possesses, the serpent possesses; when truth possesses, Christ possesses. For he himself said, "I am the truth."<sup>13</sup> But about the devil he said, "And he stood not in the truth because truth is not in him."<sup>14</sup>

(4) Now, Christ is the truth in such a way that in Christ you receive the whole truth: true Word, God equal to the Father, true soul, true flesh, true man, true God, true birth, true suffering, true death, true resurrection. If you say that any of these is false, decay sets in, the worms of lies are born from the serpent's poison, and nothing will remain whole.

6. What is it, then, someone says, that the Lord is saying when he says, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Perhaps in what follows the Lord shows why he said this. "My hour," he says, "has not yet come." For so he says, "What is it to me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come." And why this was said must be investigated.

(2) First, then, let us resist the heretics. What does the ancient serpent say, who from of old has breathed forth his poi-

12. The Latin word is *paranyphi*, a loan word from Greek that occurs only in the Late Latin period. The *paranyphus* performed functions for the bridegroom similar to those performed by the classical *pronuba* for the bride; but the practice of having attendants for the groom does not seem original to the Romans. See Ch. Daremberg and E. Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines* (Paris, 1904) 3.1655, note 20; and J. Marquardt, *Das Privatleben der Römer in Handbuch der Römischen Altertümer*, ed. J. Marquardt and Th. Mommsen (Leipzig, 1879) 7.1.48, note 1.

13. Cf. Jn 14.6.

14. Cf. Jn 8.44.

sonous suggestion? What does he say? Jesus did not have a woman as his mother. How do you prove it? Because he says, he [Jesus] said, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Who told us this that we might believe that he said it? Who told it? Why, John the Evangelist, of course.

(3) But John the Evangelist himself said, "And the mother of Jesus was there." For he told it as follows: "On the third day a marriage took place in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now he also had been invited to the marriage with his disciples and he had come there." We have two sentences quoted from the Evangelist. "The mother of Jesus was there," the Evangelist said; what Jesus said to his mother, the Evangelist himself said. And see, brothers, how he said that Jesus answered his mother, so that he first said, "his mother said to him," so that you may hold the virginity of your heart fortified against the tongue of the serpent. There, in this very gospel, with the very same Evangelist relating it, it is said, "the mother of Jesus was there" and "his mother said to him." Who related this? John the Evangelist. And what did Jesus answer his mother? "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Who relates this? The very same John the Evangelist.

(4) O Evangelist, most faithful and most truthful, do you tell me that Jesus said, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Why did you place at his side the mother whom he does not acknowledge? For you said, "the mother of Jesus was there" and "his mother said to him." Why didn't you rather say, "Mary was there" and "Mary said to him"? You make both statements, "his mother said to him" and "Jesus answered her, 'What is it to me and to you, woman?'" Why this, except that both are true? But they want to believe the Evangelist where he says that Jesus said to his mother, "What is it to me and to you, woman," and they do not wish to believe the Evangelist where he says, "the mother of Jesus was there" and "his mother said to him."

(5) But who is there who resists the serpent and holds fast the truth, whose virginity of heart is not corrupted by the devil's cunning? He who believes that both are true, both that the mother of Jesus was there and that Jesus made that reply

to his mother. But if he does not yet understand in what manner Jesus said, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" let him in the meanwhile believe that he did say it, and that he said it to his mother. The devoted faith of the believer will bring forth the fruit of understanding.

7. I ask you, O faithful Christians, was the mother of Jesus there? Answer: She was. How do you know? Answer: The gospel says this. What did Jesus reply to his mother? Answer: "What is it to me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come." And how do you know this? Answer: The gospel says this. Let no one corrupt this your belief if you wish to keep your virginity intact for the bridegroom. But if it is asked of you why he answered his mother this way, let him who understands speak. But he who does not yet understand, let him still believe most firmly that Jesus made such an answer and that he made it to his mother. By this devotion he will merit also to understand why he so answered, if he should knock by praying and without quarreling he should approach the door of truth. Only let him beware lest, while he thinks that he knows or is ashamed not to know why he answered thus, he may be compelled to believe either that the Evangelist who said, "the mother of Jesus was there," had lied or that Christ himself suffered a false death for our sins and showed false scars for our justification,<sup>15</sup> and falsely said, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."<sup>16</sup>

(2) For if there were a false mother, false flesh, false death, false wounds of the passion, false scars of the Resurrection, then the truth will not set free those who believe in him, but rather falsehood will. Rather, let falsehood yield to truth; and let all be confounded who want to appear truthful because they try to show Christ to be deceitful and who do not want it to be said to them, "We do not believe you because you are lying," when they say that the truth itself lied.

(3) And, yet, if we should say to them, "How do you know that Christ said, 'What is it to me and to you, woman?'" they

15. Cf. Rom 4.25.

16. Cf. Jn 8.31-32.

answer that they believed the gospel. Why do they not believe the gospel when it says "the mother of Jesus was there" and "his mother said to him"? Or if the gospel lies in this, how can that be believed which Jesus said, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Why do they not rather, the wretched men, believe faithfully also that the Lord made that answer not to a strange woman but to his mother?

(4) And why do they not devoutly seek out why he answered that way? For there is considerable difference between him who says, "I want to know why Christ made this reply to his mother," and him who says, "I know that Christ did not make this answer to his mother." It is one thing to wish to understand what has been hidden, another to be unwilling to believe what has been made clear. One who says, "I want to know why Christ made this reply to his mother," wishes the gospel in which he believes to be made clear to him. But one who says, "I know that Christ did not make this reply to his mother," accuses of a lie the very gospel in which he has believed that Christ did make such a reply.

8. Now then, if you please, brothers, since they have been repulsed and forever wander in their blindness, unless they should be healed in humility, let us ask why our Lord made this reply to his mother. He, uniquely, was born of the Father without a mother, and of the mother without a father; as God without a mother, as man without a father; before time without a mother, in the end of times without a father. What he answered, he answered to his mother, because "the mother of Jesus was there" and "his mother said to him." All of this the gospel says. From that passage we know that "the mother of Jesus was there," where we know that he said to her, "What is it to me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come." Let us believe all of it and let us examine what we do not yet understand.

(2) And first watch out for this, that, just as the Manichaeans have found an opportunity for their incredulity because the Lord said, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" so the astrologers may not find an opportunity for their deceit because he said, "My hour has not yet come." And if he said this

in accord with astrologers, then we have committed sacrilege by burning their books.<sup>17</sup> But if we have acted rightly, as was done in the times of the apostles,<sup>18</sup> it was not in accord with them that the Lord said, "My hour has not yet come." For [these] prating seduced seducers say, "You see that Christ, who said, 'My hour has not yet come,' was subject to fate."

(3) Whom, then, must we answer first, the heretics or the astrologers? For both come from that serpent and wish to corrupt the Church's virginity of heart which it holds in pure faith. First, if you please, let us reply to those whom we had proposed, to whom we have already replied in large part. But that they not suppose that we do not have anything to say about these words with which the Lord replied to his mother, we give you more instruction against them; for I believe what has already been said is sufficient to refute them.

9. Why, then, did the Son say to his mother, "What is it to me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come"? Our Lord, Jesus Christ, was both God and man. In regard to the fact that he was God, he had no mother; in regard to the fact that he was man, he did. Therefore she was the mother of [his] flesh, the mother of [his] humanity, the mother of the weakness which he took for our sake. But the miracle he was about to do, he was going to do according to [his] divinity, not [his] weakness, in regard to the fact he was a God, not in regard to the fact that he was born weak. But the weakness of God is stronger than men.<sup>19</sup> Therefore his mother demanded a miracle; but he does not, as it were, acknowledge the human womb, as he is about to perform divine deeds, as if saying, "That in me which does a miracle you did not give birth to, you did not give birth to my divinity; but because you bore my weakness, I shall recognize you then, when that weakness will hang on the cross." For this is what "My hour has not yet come" means. For he who had, in fact, always known her then recognized her.

(2) Even before he was born of her, he knew his mother in

17. Cf. *En in Ps* 61.23 and Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 489.

18. Cf. Acts 19.19.

19. Cf. 1 Cor 1.25.

his providential will;<sup>20</sup> and before he himself, as God, created her from whom he himself, as man, was to be created, he knew [his] mother. But at a specific hour he did not acknowledge her in a mystery; and at a specific hour which had not yet come he acknowledged her again in a mystery. For he acknowledged her then when that to which she had given birth was dying. For that through which Mary had been made was not dying, but that which was made from Mary was dying. The eternity of [his] divinity was not dying, but the weakness of [his] flesh was dying. Therefore he made that reply, distinguishing in the faith of believers the one who came from the one through whom he came.

(3) For he, God and Lord of heaven and earth, came through a woman as his mother. In regard to the fact that he was Lord of the world, Lord of heaven and earth, he was also, of course, Lord of Mary; and in regard to the fact that he was creator of the world, creator of heaven and earth, he was also the creator of Mary. But insofar as it was said, "made of a woman, made under the Law,"<sup>21</sup> he was the son of Mary. He was the Lord of Mary, he was the son of Mary; he was the creator of Mary, he was created from Mary.<sup>22</sup> Do not be amazed that he is both son and Lord. For as he was [the son] of Mary, so, also, he was said to be the son of David; indeed the son of David precisely because the son of Mary. Hear the Apostle speaking clearly: "who was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh."<sup>23</sup> Hear that he was also the Lord of David; and let David himself say this: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand.'"<sup>24</sup> And Jesus himself proposed this to the Jews, and by it refuted them.<sup>25</sup>

(4) Therefore just as he was both the son and the Lord of David, the son of David according to the flesh, the Lord of David according to [his] divinity, so he was the son of Mary

20. The translation involves a theological interpretation; Augustine has *in praedestinatione*, perhaps better simply, "in predestination."

21. Gal 4.4.

22. Cf. *Tractate* 5.4.

23. Rom 1.3.

24. Ps 109.1.

25. Cf. Mt 22.41-46; Mk 12.35-37; Lk 20.41-44.

according to the flesh and the Lord of Mary according to [his] majesty. Because, therefore, she was not the mother of [his] divinity and what she sought would be a miracle through [his] divinity, he answered her, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" But that you may not think that I am denying you as my mother, "My hour has not yet come." For there shall I acknowledge you when the weakness of which you are the mother has begun to hang on the cross. Let us test if this is true.

(5) When the Lord suffered, as the same Evangelist says, who knew the mother of the Lord and who has informed us of the mother of the Lord at this wedding also, he himself relates: "There was," he says, "there near the cross the mother of Jesus. And Jesus says to his mother, 'Woman, behold your son,' and to the disciple, 'Behold your mother.'"<sup>26</sup> He entrusts the mother to the disciple; he, about to die before the mother, to rise again before the mother's death, entrusts the mother. A human being entrusts a human being to a human being. Mary had given birth to this. That hour had come about which the Lord had said, "My hour has not yet come."

10. In my opinion, brothers, the heretics have been answered. Let us answer the astrologers. And by what do they try to demonstrate that Jesus was subject to fate? Because he himself said, they say, "My hour has not yet come." Therefore we believe him. If he had said, "I have no hour," he would have debarred the astrologers. "But look," they say, "he himself said, 'My hour has not yet come.'" If, then, he had said, "I have no hour," he would have debarred the astrologers; there would be no way that they might misrepresent [him]. But, in fact, because he said, "My hour has not yet come," what can we say against his own words?

(2) It is amazing that the astrologers, while believing the words of Christ, try to convince Christians that Christ lived under a fated hour. Let them, then, believe Christ when he says, "I have the power to lay down my life, and to take it up again. No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of my-

26. Cf. Jn 19.25-27.

self, and I take it up again."<sup>27</sup> Is this the power subject to fate, then? Let them show us a man who has the power over when he shall die, how long he shall live; they will have no one to show. Therefore let them believe God when he says, "I have the power to lay down my life, and to take it up again." And let them seek why it was said, "My hour has not yet come." And let them no longer for this reason put the maker of heaven, the creator and governor of the stars under fate. Because if there were a fate in the stars, the maker of the stars could not be subject to the destiny of the stars. What is more, not only did Christ not have what you call fate, but neither do you, nor I, nor that man, nor any man at all.

11. And yet the seduced seduce and propose their fallacies to men. They spread nets to capture men, and this in the streets. On the other hand, those who try to capture wild beasts do it at least in forests and in the wilderness. How unhappily vain are men for whose capture a net is spread in the forum!

(2) When men are selling themselves to men, they take money; these men give money in order to sell themselves to vanities. For they go in to the astrologer that they may buy lords for themselves, such as it pleases the astrologer to give, whether Saturn or Jupiter or Mercury or any other of sacrilegious name. A free man has gone in and paid his money to come out as a slave. No, rather, he would not go in if he were free; but he went in where Lord Error and Mistress Desire dragged him. Wherefore also Truth says, "Everyone who commits a sin is a slave of sin."<sup>28</sup>

12. Why, then, did he say, "My hour has not yet come"? More likely because he had it in his power when he should die, but did not yet see that it was the right time to use that power. Just as, brothers, for example, we say, "It is now the scheduled time for us to go to celebrate the sacraments." If we should go before it is necessary are we not wrong and mixed up? Because, therefore, we do not act except when it is the right time, do we, therefore, in doing these things, when we

27. Cf. Jn 10.17-19.

28. Cf. Jn 8.34.

speaking this way, consider its fate? What, then, does it mean, "My hour has not yet come"? That hour has not yet come when I know it is the right time for me to suffer, when my passion will be effective; then I shall suffer willingly, that you may keep both: "My hour has not yet come" and "I have the power to lay down my life, and to take it up again."

(2) He had come, therefore, having it in his power when he should die. But if he were to die before he had chosen his disciples, that would certainly be ridiculous. If he were a man who did not have his hour in his power, he could have died before he had chosen his disciples. Even if, perchance, he were to die after his disciples were already chosen and instructed, it would be given to him, but he would not himself be the one who accomplished it. But, in fact, he who had come, having [it] in [his] hands when he would go, when he would return, how far he would advance, he, to whom the nether world lay open, not only when he died but when he arose, that he might show us the hope of the immortality of his Church, showed in the head what the members ought to expect. For he who arose in the head will arise also in the other members.

(3) Therefore his hour had not yet come; it was not yet the right time. His disciples had to be called, the kingdom of heaven announced, signs of power effected, the Lord's divinity manifested by miracles, the Lord's humanity manifested by his compassion for mortal men. For he who was hungry because he was a man fed so many thousands with five loaves of bread because he was God. He who was sleeping because he was a man gave orders to the winds and waves because he was God. All these things had to be made manifest first that the evangelists might have something to write, and that there might be something to be preached to the Church.

(4) But when he had done as much as he judged was enough, there came, not the hour of necessity but of [his own] will, not of his human condition but of power.

13. Well now, brothers, since we have replied to both groups, shall we say nothing about the meaning of the water jars, of the water turned to wine, of the chief steward, of the bride-

groom, of the mother of Jesus in mystery, of the wedding itself? All these things need to be discussed, but you must not be burdened. In fact, I even wanted, in the name of Christ, to discuss it with you yesterday, when, my beloved people, a sermon is usually due to you; but I was not allowed because of certain obligations which hindered me. If, therefore, my holy people, it pleases you, what pertains to the mystery of this deed let us put off until tomorrow, and let us not burden either your or my weakness. For perhaps there are many today who have come because of the day's solemnity and not to hear a sermon. They who will come tomorrow, let them come to hear, that we may neither cheat those eager to learn nor burden those without relish for it.

## TRACTATE 9

*On John 2.1 – 11*



**SAY THE LORD**, our God, be present that he may grant to us to deliver what we have promised. For yesterday, if you remember, my holy people, when the shortness of time prevented us from completing the sermon that was begun, we put it off until today, so that those things which in this event of the gospel reading were put mystically in profound mysteries might, with his help, be made clear. And so there is no need to delay any longer in making God's miracle manifest. For it is God himself who through all of creation every day performs miracles which have lost their value for men, not from their easiness but from their regularity.<sup>1</sup>

(2) But those rare ones which were performed by the same Lord, that is, by the Word made flesh for us, have produced greater astonishment in men, not because they were greater than those which he does daily in creation but because those which happen daily are accomplished, as it were, in the course of nature while those others seem to have been displayed to men's eyes by the action of a power immediately present, as it were. We have said,<sup>2</sup> as you remember, one dead man rose again; men were dumbfounded, while no one is amazed that those who did not exist before are born everyday. So too, who is not amazed that water was turned into wine, although God does this every year apropos of vines? But because all the things which the Lord Jesus did are not only valuable for arousing our hearts by miracles, but also for instructing [our hearts] with a knowledge of the faith, we must thoroughly in-

1. Cf. *Tractate* 8.1.

2. *Ibid.*

investigate what every one of them means, that is, what they signify. For, as you recall, we put off until today the significance of all these things.

2. The fact that the Lord was invited and came to the wedding, without even considering the mystical meaning, was meant to affirm what he himself created.<sup>3</sup> For there were going to be those, about whom the Apostle spoke,<sup>4</sup> who would forbid marriage and say that marriage is an evil and that the devil created it,<sup>5</sup> although the same Lord in the gospel, when asked whether a man is allowed to divorce his wife for any reason, replied that he is not allowed except in the case of fornication.<sup>6</sup> And in his answer, if you remember, he said this: "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder."<sup>7</sup>

(2) And they who have been well instructed in the Catholic faith know that God created marriage, and as the union is from God, so divorce is from the devil. But one is allowed to divorce a wife in case of fornication for the precise reason that she first did not wish to be a wife who has not preserved conjugal fidelity to her husband. Nor are those women who vow virginity to God, although they have a higher level of honor and holiness in the Church, without marriage; for they too, together with the whole Church, belong to the marriage in which Christ is the bridegroom.

(3) And, therefore, for this reason the Lord was invited and

3. Some editors, following the Maurist edition of 1680, read here *quod ipse fecit nuptias*, "that he himself created marriage."

4. Cf. 1 Tm 4.1-3.

5. Augustine probably has in mind the Manichaeans who see the human body as a prison which entraps that particle of light which is the soul and prevents its reunion with God who is light. Thus they disapprove of marriage since its goal of procreating children assists the devil, who is darkness and evil, in the entrapment of souls in material bodies. See *De Haeresibus* 46.13 (CCL 46.317); Berrouard, *Homélies I-XVI*, 896-898; Decret, 295-296, 301-302; and Widengren, 97. Various Christian Gnostic sects held the same view of marriage. The Encratites, whom Augustine also calls the *Tatiani*, and those called the *Apostolici* were Christian heretics who prohibited marriage. See *De Haeresibus* 25 and 40 (CCL 46.301 and 307).

6. Cf. Mt 19.3-9; Mk 10.2-12; Lk 16.18.

7. Cf. Mt 19.6; Mk 10.9.

came to the wedding, that conjugal chastity might be given support and the mystery of marriages<sup>8</sup> might be shown forth. For the bridegroom of that marriage also represented the person of the Lord, [the bridegroom] to whom it was said, "You have kept the good wine until now." For Christ had kept the good wine until now, that is, his gospel.

3. For let us now begin to uncover the very secrets of the mysteries, as far as he grants in whose name we have promised you. There was prophecy in ancient times, and no times have been devoid of the dispensation of prophecy; but that prophecy, when Christ was not understood in it, was water. For, in water, wine is somehow latent. The Apostle tells what we should understand in this water: "Until this day," he says, "when Moses is read, the self-same veil has been placed upon their heart; and it is not lifted because in Christ it is made void. And when you pass over to the Lord," he says, "the veil shall be taken away."<sup>9</sup> The veil means the covering over of prophecy, so that it might not be understood. The veil is taken away when you have passed over to the Lord; thus the lack of

8. *Sacramentum* here has its usual meaning for Augustine, "mystery," a sign indicating some hidden truth about Christ and his Church, rather than "sacrament," as some interpreters of this passage maintain. See, e.g., E. Portalié, 267–268, who cites this passage to support the institution of the sacrament by Jesus, although he does concede the vagueness of Augustine's use of *sacramentum* and a difference in his use of the word in connection with marriage than with baptism, Eucharist, or holy orders. He also acknowledges its symbolic meaning as one dimension of this passage. See Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 900–901, and also his excellent analysis of Augustine's treatment of the Cana story in "L'enseignement de saint Augustin sur le mariage dans le Tract. 9,2 in Ioannis Evangelium," *Augustinus (Strenas augustianas P. Victorino Capanaga oblatas curavit edendas. I. Oroz-Reta)* (1967) 83–96. Augustine interprets Jesus' presence at Cana as confirming the statement about Adam and Eve in Gn 2.24: "They will be two in one flesh." This unity of man and wife in marriage is seen at Cana as a symbol of the unity of Jesus and his Church. As Berrouard says, this does not exclude the sacramentality of marriage; in fact it provides a base upon which later theologians can build the sacramental theology of marriage. See E. Schmitt, *Le mariage chrétien dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin: Une théologie baptismale de la vie conjugale* (Paris, 1983). On Tractates 8 and 9 see pp. 73–74.

9. Cf. 2 Cor 3.14–16.

understanding<sup>10</sup> is taken away when you have passed over to the Lord, and what was water becomes wine for you.

(2) Read all the prophetic books, without perceiving Christ; what will you find so insipid and silly? Understand Christ there, and what you are reading not only becomes savory, but it also intoxicates, shifting the mind away from the body, so that, forgetting the things that are past, you stretch yourself forth to those things that are before you.<sup>11</sup>

4. Therefore, from ancient times, from the time when the succession of those born in the human race proceeds forward, prophecy was not silent about Christ, but its meaning had been hidden there; for it was still water. How do we prove that in all previous times, up to the age in which the Lord came, prophecy was not lacking about him? From the Lord's own words. For when he had arisen from the dead, he found the apostles doubting about him whom they had followed. For they saw him dead and had no hope that he would rise again; and all their hope perished. Why was that thief praised and [why] did he deserve to be that day in paradise?<sup>12</sup> Because, fastened on a cross, he acknowledged Christ at that time when the disciples doubted about him.

(2) And so he found them faltering and, in a way, reproaching themselves because they had hoped for redemption in him. Still they grieved that he had been killed without fault because they knew that he was innocent. And they themselves said this after the Resurrection when he found some of them on the road in gloom: "'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem and have you not known the things that have been done there in these days?' Then he said to them, 'What things?'" Then they said, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth who was a prophet,

10. The Latin word *insipientia* probably involves a word play since the root of this word suggests in its ultimate denotation the meaning of "tastelessness" as Gibb translates it; but it seems improbable that this meaning would be uppermost in the minds of Augustine's congregation, in view of the usage of the word in extant Latin writings. Still the metaphor is supported by *insipidum* in the next sentence and *sapit* in the following one.

11. Cf. Phil 3.13.

12. Cf. Lk 23.39-43.

mighty in work and word in the sight of God and all the people, how our priests and princes delivered him up to the sentence of death, and crucified him. But we were hoping that it was he who should redeem Israel. And now today is the third day since these things were done.”<sup>13</sup>

(3) And when one of the two, whom he had found on the road going to a nearby village, had said these and other things, he himself answered and said, “‘O senseless ones and slow of heart to believe in all things which the Prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer all these things and enter into his glory?’ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he was interpreting to them the things that were concerning him in all the Scripture.”<sup>14</sup>

(4) Likewise in another place, when he was even willing to be touched by the hands of the disciples that they might believe that he has arisen in body, he said, “‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled which have been written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me.’ Then he opened their understanding to them, that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, ‘Thus it has been written, that the Christ suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day, and that penance and remission of sins be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”<sup>15</sup>

5. When these words from the gospel, which are certainly clear, have been understood, all those mysteries which lie hidden in this miracle of the Lord will be opened. Consider what he said, that it was necessary for the things which have been written about him to be fulfilled in Christ. Where were they written? “In the Law,” he said, “and the Prophets and the Psalms.” He omitted none of the ancient Scriptures. That was the water; and for that reason they were called senseless by the Lord because they still tasted<sup>16</sup> water, not wine. But how

13. Cf. Lk 24.18–21.

14. Cf. Lk 24.25–27.

15. Cf. Lk 24.44–47.

16. The word play suggested in footnote 10 continues in this section. Here the critical word in the Latin is *insensati* which I have translated “sense-

did he make wine from water? When he opened their understanding to them and explained the Scriptures to them, beginning with Moses through all the Prophets. Now, intoxicated by this, they said, "Was not our heart burning on the road when he opened to us the Scriptures?"<sup>17</sup> For they understood Christ in these books in which they had not known him.

(2) Therefore our Lord, Jesus Christ, changed water into wine; and what was tasteless acquires taste, what was not intoxicating intoxicates. For if he had ordered the water poured out of them and so himself put in wine from the secret hollows of creation from which he also created the bread when he satisfied so many thousands—for five loaves would not afford satisfaction to five thousand men, or indeed [produce] twelve full baskets, hut the omnipotence of the Lord was, so to speak, a fountain of bread—thus he could have also, after the water had been poured out, poured in wine; but if he had done this, he would have seemed to have repudiated the old Scripture.

(3) But when he turned the water itself into wine, he showed us that the ancient Scripture comes from him too; for by his order the jars were filled. This Scripture, too, is indeed from the Lord; but it has no taste if Christ should not be understood in it.

6. But consider carefully what he said: "The things which have been written in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me." Now we know from what time he sets forth the Law, that is, from the beginning of the world: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth."<sup>18</sup> From then right down to this time which we are now living is the sixth era, as

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less" to duplicate the Augustinian word play. The Greek text of Lk 24.25, quoted in section 4, reads *anōētoi*, "not understanding"; the *Vulgate* translates this *stulti*, "stupid." Augustine's version has *insensati*, a negative adjective created from the root of the verb *sentire* which means both "to discern by the senses" and "to discern by the mind." The English word "senseless," while it does not ordinarily carry both meanings, nonetheless best conveys the word play.

17. Cf. Lk 24.32.

18. Cf. Gn 1.1.

you have often heard and know. For the first era is calculated from Adam to Noe, the second from Noe to Abraham, and as the Evangelist Matthew follows and determines the order,<sup>19</sup> the third from Abraham to David, the fourth from David to the banishment to Babylon, the fifth from the banishment to Babylon to John the Baptist, the sixth from then to the end of the world.

(2) And God created man according to [his] image<sup>20</sup> on the sixth day for a purpose; for in that sixth age the renewal of our mind is manifested through the gospel, according to the image of him who created us,<sup>21</sup> and water is turned into wine that we may taste the now manifested Christ in the Law and the Prophets. Therefore "there were six water jars there," which he ordered to be filled with water.

(3) And so those six water jars signify the six eras in which prophecy was not lacking. Now these six eras, separated and distinguished by high points, so to speak, would be as empty vessels unless they were filled by Christ. Why have I said, the eras which would run on uselessly unless the Lord Jesus were preached in them? The prophecies have been fulfilled; the jars are full. But that the water be changed into wine, let Christ be understood in all that prophecy.

7. What, then does this mean: "They held two or three measures (*metretae*) each"?<sup>22</sup> That expression especially points out a mystery to us. For he calls certain measures (*mensurae*) *metretae*, as if one were to say urns, amphoras, or something of the sort. *Metreta* is the name of measure (*mensura*), and this measure takes its name from the word "measure"; for the Greeks call measure (*mensura*) *métron*; *metretae* are derived

19. Cf. Mt 1.17.

20. Cf. Gn 1.27.

21. Cf. Col 3.10.

22. This text and Augustine's interpretation of the term *metreta* require some clarification. The general term for measure is *mensura* in Latin and *métron* in Greek. *Metreta* in its basic denotation is a specific liquid measure derived from the general Greek term *métron*; hence it designates a specific amount of liquid, about eight and one half English gallons. But *metreta* also connotes the container which holds this amount, and the text could be translated, "They held two or three casks each" (understanding that in the ancient Mediterranean area liquid containers were pottery and not made of wood).

from this. Therefore "They held two or three measures (*metretae*) each."

(2) What do we say, brothers? If he would only say three each, our mind would hurry only to the mystery of the Trinity. But, perhaps, we ought now quickly turn our thought from there, for, in fact, he said, "two or three each." For, since the Father and the Son must have been named, logically the Holy Spirit must also be understood. For the Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of the Father only, or of the Son only, but is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. For it has been written, "If anyone has loved the world, the Spirit of the Father is not in him."<sup>23</sup> Likewise it has been written, "But whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him."<sup>24</sup> But the Spirit of the Father and the Son is the same. Thus since the Father and the Son have been named, the Holy Spirit is understood too, because he is the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

(3) Since, in fact, the Father and the Son are named, two measures (*metretae*) are named, as it were; since, moreover, the Holy Spirit is understood there, there are three measures (*metretae*). Therefore, it was not said, some holding two measures (*metretae*), some three, but the same six water-jars "held two or three measures (*metretae*) each." [It is] as if he said, "And when I say two each, I mean the Spirit of the Father and

The second translation might seem to be favored by Augustine's reference to urns (*urnas*) and amphoras (*amphoras*). These two words regularly designated containers, the *urna* being a narrow-necked, full-bodied vessel and the *amphora* a large earthenware jar. Both were also used, however, to designate liquid measures, the *urna* being about three English gallons and the *amphora* about six English gallons. Since the Greek *metrētēs* designates only the liquid measure, and is used to translate the Hebrew *bath*, also a liquid measure, it seems better to translate *metreta* as "measure" rather than "cask." That Augustine understands *metreta*, *urna*, and *amphora* here as liquid measures rather than containers is also supported by the later definition of Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologiae*, XVI.26, *De Mensuris*, where after defining *urna* and *amphora* as liquid measures, he refers to them as an aid in defining *metreta* in almost the same words used here by Augustine.

23. Cf. 1 Jn 2.15 For "Spirit" (*Spiritus*) both the *Vulgate* and the Greek texts have "love" (*caritas* and *agápe*). Cf. section 8. In *Tr in Io Ep* 2.8--9 Augustine reads *dilectio* and in 2.14 *caritas* rather than *Spiritus* (PL 35.1994 and 1997).

24. Cf. Rom 8.9.

the Son is to be understood with them also; and when I say three each, I proclaim the Trinity itself more clearly."

8. Therefore whoever names the Father and the Son ought to understand therein the mutual love, as it were, of the Father and the Son, which is the Holy Spirit. For perhaps an examination of the Scriptures (and I do not say this with the idea that I can teach it today, or, as if some other explanation cannot be found), but still perhaps a thorough investigation of the Scriptures does show that the Holy Spirit is love.

(2) And do not think that love is cheap. On the contrary, how is it cheap when all things which are not cheap are called dear? Therefore, if things which are not cheap are dear, what is dearer than dearness itself?<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, love is so commended by the Apostle that he says, "I show to you a more excellent way. If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I know all mysteries and all knowledge, and have prophecy and all faith so as to move mountains, yet do not have love, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my goods to the poor and deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing."<sup>26</sup> How great, then, is love which, if it is missing, all the rest is held in vain, but if it is present, all things are held rightly? Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul, while praising love most copiously and richly, said less about it than what the Apostle John, whose gospel this is, said briefly. For he did not hesitate to say, "God is love."<sup>27</sup> Also it has been written, "Because the love of God has been poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."<sup>28</sup>

(3) Who, therefore, would name the Father and the Son and not understand therein the love of the Father and the Son? And when a person begins to have that, he will have the Holy Spirit; and, if he does not have that, he will be without the Holy Spirit. And as your body, if it is without spirit, that is,

25. The Latin words *carus* and *caritas* have the same double meaning as English *dear* and *dearness*, referring to both "affection" and "expensiveness."

26. Cf. 1 Cor 12.31–13.3 (NAB and CC<sup>13</sup> 13.1–3).

27. Cf. 1 Jn 4.16.

28. Cf. Rom 5.5.

your soul, is dead, so your soul, if it is without the Holy Spirit, that is, without love, will be accounted dead. Therefore "the water jars held two measures" because in the prophecy of all times the Father and the Son are preached; but the Holy Spirit is there too, and so it was added "or three."

(4) "I and the Father," he says, "are one."<sup>29</sup> But far be it that the Holy Spirit should be missing when we hear, "I and the Father are one." Nevertheless, because he named the Father and the Son, let the water jars hold "two measures," but hear "or three." "Go, baptize the nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>30</sup> And so where it is said, "two each," [the Trinity] is not expressed but understood; but where it is said "or three," the Trinity also is expressed.

9. But there is another meaning which must not be left unmentioned, and I shall state it. Let each one choose what pleases him; we do not withhold what is suggested. For it is the Lord's table and his minister ought not deceitfully to deprive the banqueters, especially those as hungry as you in your eagerness appear to be. The prophecy which is dispensed from ancient times pertains to the salvation of all the nations. Moses was indeed sent to the people of Israel alone, and through him the Law was given to that people alone, and the Prophets themselves were from that people. Wherefore the water-jars are also said to be "according to the manner of the purifying of the Jews."

(2) But still it is clear that the prophecy was announced also to the rest of the nations, inasmuch as Christ was concealed in him in whom all the nations are blessed, as it was promised to Abraham when the Lord said, "In your seed all the nations shall be blessed."<sup>31</sup> However, this was not yet understood because the water had not yet been turned into wine. Therefore the prophecy was dispensed to all the nations. And that this may become clear in a more pleasant way, let us, as time allows, mention certain things about each of the eras, as represented by each of the water-jars.

29. Jn 10.30.

31. Cf. Gn 22.18.

30. Cf. Mt 28.19.

10. In the very beginning Adam and Eve were the parents of all the nations, not solely of the Jews; and whatever was represented in Adam about Christ pertained, of course, to all the nations, for whom salvation lies in Christ. What, then, shall I particularly say about the water of the first water-jar except what the Apostle said about Adam and Eve? For no one will say that I have understood wrongly when I set forth, not my understanding, but the Apostle's.

(2) How great a mystery, then, does that one statement contain about Christ, which the Apostle recalls when he says, "And they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great mystery."<sup>32</sup> And that no one might understand this greatness of mystery to lie in the individual men who have wives, he says, "But I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church." What is this great mystery, "they shall be two in one flesh"? When the Scripture of Genesis was telling about Adam and Eve, in that section one came to these words: "For this reason a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh."<sup>33</sup> Therefore, if Christ clove to the Church so that they were two in one flesh, how did he leave the Father? How, the mother? He left the Father because, although he was in the form of God, he did not think it robbery to be equal with God, but he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.<sup>34</sup> That is, he left the Father, not because he abandoned and withdrew from the Father, but because he appeared to men not in that form in which he was equal with the Father. How did he leave the mother? By leaving the synagogue of the Jews, from which he was born according to the flesh, and by cleaving to the Church which he gathered from all the nations.

(3) Therefore the first water-jar, too, held a prophecy about Christ; but since those things which I am saying were not being preached among the peoples, it was still water; it had not yet been changed into wine. And because the Lord has enlightened us through the Apostle, in order to show us what we

32. Cf. Eph 5.31-32.

33. Cf. Gn 2.24.

34. Cf. Phil 2.6-7.

should seek there in this one sentence, "they shall be two in one flesh, a great mystery in reference to Christ and the Church," we may now seek Christ everywhere and drink wine from all the water-jars.

(4) Adam sleeps that Eve may be made;<sup>35</sup> Christ dies that the Church may be made. Eve was made from the side of the sleeping Adam; the side of the dead Christ is pierced with a spear<sup>36</sup> that the mysteries may flow forth by which the Church is to be formed. To whom would it not be clear that in those past events future events have been represented, inasmuch as the Apostle says that Adam himself is a figure of him who was to come? He says, "who is a figure of him who was to come."<sup>37</sup> All things were prefigured mystically. For, in fact, God could take a rib from a man who was awake and form a woman. Or did he, perhaps, have to sleep to keep his side from hurting when the rib was extracted. Who is there who could sleep so that bones are torn out of him without his waking up? Or was it because God tore them out that the man felt nothing? He who could do so with a sleeping man, could also, then, tear them out of a man awake without pain.

(5) But beyond all doubt the first water-jar was filled, the prophecy of that time about this future time was dispensed.

11. Christ was also represented in Noe; and the world, in that ark. For why were all living creatures shut up in that ark<sup>38</sup> except to signify all the nations? For God did not lack the capability of creating anew every species of living things. For when no creatures were in existence, did he not say, "Let the earth bring forth"<sup>39</sup> and the earth brought forth? So, from the same source as he made them then, he could remake them; he made them by a word, he could remake them by a word.

(2) Except, he was revealing a mystery and he was filling the second jar of prophetic dispensation that through the wood the figure of the world might be set free, because the life of the world was going to be fastened on wood.

35. Cf. Gn 2.21-22.

37. Cf. Rom 5.14.

39. Cf. Gn 1.24.

36. Cf. Jn 19.33-34.

38. Cf. Gn 7.7-9.

12. As for the third jar, it already was said to Abraham himself, as I have mentioned,<sup>40</sup> "In your seed all the nations shall be blessed"; and who would not see whose figure his only son represented, who carried wood for himself to the sacrifice where he was being led to be sacrificed himself? For the Lord carried his own cross, as the gospel says.<sup>41</sup> It should suffice to have mentioned this about the third jar.

13. Now about David, why shall I say that his prophecy pertained to all the nations when we have just heard the Psalm—and it is difficult to mention a Psalm where this does not resound? But, to be sure, as I have said, we have just sung, "Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you inherit among all the nations."<sup>42</sup> And for this reason the Donatists are like those who were cast forth from the wedding, just as that man, who did not have a wedding garment, was invited and came, but was cast forth from the number of the guests because he was not dressed in honor of the bridegroom.<sup>43</sup>

(2) For he who seeks his own honor, not Christ's, has no wedding garment; for they are unwilling to agree with the word of that one who was the bridegroom's friend and said, "He it is who baptizes."<sup>44</sup> And not unjustly that which he was not was voiced as a rebuke against the man who had no wedding garment: "Friend, how have you come here?"<sup>45</sup> And as he stood speechless, so, too, did they. For what good is the noise of the mouth if the heart is dumb. They know, of course, that inside themselves they have nothing to say. Inside they are speechless; outside they make a lot of noise. Whether they want to or not, they hear it sung even amongst themselves: "Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you inherit among all the nations." And by not being in communion with all the nations,

40. In section 9; cf. Gn 22.18.

41. Cf. Jn 19.17.

42. Cf. Ps 81.8. Augustine knows two readings of this verse, *hereditabis*, as here, and *dispendes*, "you will destroy"; he cites both as providing sound meanings in *En in Ps* 81.7 (CCL 39.1140). Berrouard, *Homélies I–XVI*, 534, suggests that he chooses *hereditabis* here as better suited to his anti-donatist argument.

43. Cf. Mt 22.11–13.

44. Cf. Jn 1.33; see also *Tractate* 6.23.

45. Cf. Mt 22.12.

what else do they acknowledge than that they are disinherited?

14. Therefore, what I was saying, brothers, that prophecy pertains to all the nations (for I want to show another meaning in what was said, "They held two or three measures"). Prophecy, I say, pertains to all the nations, and we have just related that this was shown in Adam "who is a figure of him who was to come."<sup>46</sup>

(2) But who would not know that all the nations have risen up from him and that by the four letters in his name the four parts of the world are designated in their Greek names? For if east, west, north, south were said in Greek, as Holy Scripture mentions them in many places, you find the name Adam in the first letters of the words; for in Greek the above-mentioned parts of the world are called *anatolé*, *dýsis*, *árktos*, *mesēmbria*.<sup>47</sup> If you were to write these four nouns as if [they were] four verses, one under the other, Adam is read in their first letters.

(3) This has been represented in Noe because of the ark in which were all living things which signified all the nations. This has been represented in Abraham to whom it was quite clearly said, "In your seed all the nations shall be blessed."<sup>48</sup> This has been represented in David from whose Psalms, not to mention other places, we have just sung, "Arise, O God, judge the earth, for you inherit among all the nations."<sup>49</sup> For to what God is it said, "Arise," except to him who was asleep. "Arise, O God, judge the earth." [It is] as if it were said, "You have been asleep, judged by the earth; arise that you may judge the earth." And to what end does that prophecy pertain, "for you inherit among all the nations"?

15. Now in the fifth era, in the fifth water-jar, as it were, David saw both that a stone hewn from a mountain without hands had broken all the kingdoms of the earth and that the stone had grown and become a great mountain so as to fill all the face of the earth.<sup>50</sup> What is clearer, my brothers? A stone

46. Cf. Rom 5.14 and section 10.

47. But in Hebrew Adam has only three letters. Cf. Comeau, 125.

48. Cf. Gn 22.18 and sections 9 and 12.

49. Cf. Ps 81.8 and section 13.

50. Cf. Dn 2.34-35 and *Tractate* 4.4.

is hewn from a mountain; it is a stone which the builders rejected and it became the cornerstone.<sup>51</sup> From what mountain is it hewn except from the kingdom of the Jews from which our Lord, Jesus Christ, was born according to the flesh? And it is hewn without hands, without human work, because he was born of a virgin without marital embrace.

(2) That mountain from which it was hewn had not filled the whole face of the earth; for the kingdom of the Jews had not gained control over all the nations. But truly we see that the kingdom of Christ is taking possession of the whole world.

16. Now to the sixth era belongs John the Baptist than whom no greater man has arisen among those born of women,<sup>52</sup> about whom it was said, "One greater than a prophet."<sup>53</sup> How does he, too, show that Christ was sent to all the nations?

(2) When the Jews came to him to be baptized, that also they might not be puffed up from the name of Abraham, he said, "Brood of vipers, who has shown you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of penance."<sup>54</sup> That is, be humble; for he was speaking to proud men. But of what were they proud? Of the ancestry of [their] flesh, not of the fruit of imitation of father Abraham. What did he say to them? "Do not say, 'We have Abraham for our father.' For God is able out of these stones to raise up children to Abraham."<sup>55</sup> Calling all the nations stones, not because of strength as he was called a stone which the builders rejected, but because of the obtuseness and callosity of [their] stupidity, because they had become like those whom they were adoring; for they were adoring unfeeling statues, [and they were] equally unfeeling. Why unfeeling? Because it is said in the Psalm, "Let them that make them become like unto them, and everyone that trusts in them."<sup>56</sup>

(3) And thus when men begin to adore God, what do they hear? "That you may be children of your Father who is in heaven, who makes his sun to rise on the good and the evil,

51. Cf. Ps 117.22.

53. Cf. Mt 11.9; Lk 7.26.

55. Cf. Mt 3.9.

52. Cf. Mt 11.11.

54. Cf. Mt. 3.7-8.

56. Cf. Ps 115.8.

and sends rain on the just and unjust.”<sup>57</sup> Wherefore if a man becomes like to him whom he adores, what does it mean that “God is able out of these stones to raise up children to Abraham”? Let us ask ourselves and we see that it has been done. For we come from the nations; but we would not come from the nations unless God had raised up children to Abraham from stones. We have become children to Abraham by imitating [his] faith, not by birth through [his] flesh. For just as they were disinherited because of their degeneracy, so we were adopted because of our imitation. Therefore, brothers, even this prophecy of the sixth jar pertained to all the nations; and therefore “they held two or three measures” was said about all.

17. But how do we show that all the nations pertain to “two or three measures”? For it was, to some extent, understood on the part of the one reckoning, that he should say that the measures which he had said were three were two—to point out, of course, the mystery. How are there two measures? Circumcision and uncircumcision. Scripture mentions these two peoples and it passes over none of the human race when it says “circumcision and uncircumcision.”<sup>58</sup> In these two walls, coming from different directions, in order to make peace in himself Christ became the cornerstone.<sup>59</sup>

(2) Let us show that the three measures are also in all these same nations. There were three sons of Noe through whom the human race was restored.<sup>60</sup> Whence the Lord said, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened.”<sup>61</sup> Who is that woman, except the flesh of the Lord? What is that leaven, except the gospel? What are the three measures, except all the nations, because of the three sons of Noe? Therefore “six water-jars, holding two or three measures” are six eras of time, holding the prophecy pertaining to all the nations, whether signified in the two races of men, that is, in the

57. Mt 5:45.

59. Cf. Eph 2:11–22.

61. Cf. Lk 13:21.

58. Cf. Col 3:11.

60. Cf. Gn 9:18–19.

Jews and the Greeks, as the Apostle often says,<sup>62</sup> or in the three, because of the sons of Noe.

(3) For prophecy has been represented as extending to all the nations. For in that it extends it has been called a measure (*metreta*), as the Apostle says, "We have received a measure (*mensura*) extending even to you."<sup>63</sup> For preaching the gospel to the nations, he says this, "a measure extending even to you."

62. Cf., e.g., Rom 2.9. The term "Greeks" (*Graeci*) often designated "pagans" in Christian Latin.

63. Cf. 2 Cor 10.13.

## TRACTATE 10

*On John 2.12–21*



IN THE PSALM YOU HEARD the moaning of the poor whose members suffer tribulations throughout the whole earth even to the ends of the world. Strive hard, my brothers, to be among these members and of these members; for all tribulation will pass. Woe to those who rejoice! <sup>1</sup> The truth says, "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted." <sup>2</sup> God was made man. What will man be, for whose sake God was made man? Let this hope console us in every tribulation and temptation of this life. For the enemy does not stop persecuting; and if he does not rage openly, he acts with deception. For what does he do? <sup>3</sup> "And over and above their anger they acted treacherously." <sup>4</sup> From this he is called the lion and the serpent.

(2) But what is said to Christ? "And you shall trample down the lion and the serpent." <sup>5</sup> The lion because of his open danger, the serpent because of his concealed deception. The serpent drove Adam out of paradise; the very same one, as a lion, persecuted the Church, as Peter says, "Because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking whom he may devour." <sup>6</sup> Let the devil not seem to you to have lost his rage; when he flatters, then he must be feared the more.

(3) But amid all these ambushes and temptations of his, what shall we do except what we heard there: "But as for me,

1. Cf. Lk 6.25

2. Mt 5.5 (NAB 5.4).

3. Several codices have "say" instead of "do."

4. Augustine here apparently conflates Ps 5.11 and Ps 34.20; see *En in Ps* 5.12.13 and 34.2.11.8 (CCL 38.25 and 319). The reference is no doubt primarily to Ps 34 which is the Psalm read for this day and which is referred to several other times in this *Tractate*.

5. Cf. Ps 90.13.

6. 1 Pt. 5.8.

when they were troublesome to me, I put on haircloth, and I humbled my soul with fasting"?<sup>7</sup> There is one who hears; do not hesitate to pray. But he who hears remains within. Do not direct your eyes to some mountain; do not lift up your face to the stars or to the sun or the moon. Do not think you are being heard then, when you pray by the sea. Rather, abhor such prayers. Only cleanse the chamber of your heart; where you are, wherever you pray, he who hears is within, within in the secret place which [the Psalmist] calls his bosom when he says, "and my prayer will be turned in my bosom."<sup>8</sup> He who hears you is not outside you. Go not far off, and lift not yourself up, as if you might reach him with your hands. Rather, if you lift yourself up, you will fall; if you humble yourself, he will draw near. This Lord, our God, the Word of God, the Word made flesh, the Son of the Father, the Son of God, the Son of man, exalted that he might create us, humbled that he might re-create us, walking among men, suffering what is human, concealing what is divine.

2. "He went down," as the Evangelist says, "to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brothers and his disciples. And they stayed there not many days." Look, he has a mother, he has brothers, he has disciples also. Whence the mother, thence the brothers. For our Scripture regularly calls brothers not only those who are born from the same man and woman, or from the same womb, or from the same father although from different mothers, or even from the same degree, as either paternal or maternal cousins; not only these does our Scripture admit to call brothers. As it speaks, so must it be understood.

(2) [Scripture] has its own language; whoever doesn't know this language is upset and says, "How are they brothers to the Lord? For Mary didn't bear again, did she?" Far from it. The dignity of virgins (*virginum*)<sup>9</sup> began with her. That woman

7. Cf. Ps 34.13.

8. Ibid.

9. Augustine here explains a particular usage in Latin translations of Scripture which differs from general usage. In precise Latin usage *femina* is the general term for a woman, a person of the feminine gender, *mulier* design-

(*femina*) could be a mother; she could not be a "married woman who had consummated her marriage" (*mulier*). Moreover, she was called a married woman (*mulier*) by reason of her feminine sex and not from the despoilment of her chastity, and this accords with the language of Scripture itself. For you know that Eve, having been made from the side of her husband, still untouched by her husband, was immediately a married woman (*mulier*): "And he built her up into a married woman (*mulierem*)."<sup>10</sup>

(3) Then how are they brothers? The Lord's brothers are relatives of Mary, relatives of any degree at all. How do we prove it? From Scripture itself. Lot is called the brother of Abraham; Lot was the son of Abraham's brother. Read and you will find that Abraham was the paternal uncle of Lot, and they were called brothers.<sup>11</sup> How, except that they were relatives? Likewise Jacob had as his maternal uncle, Laban, the Syrian; for Laban was the brother of Jacob's mother, that is of Rebecca, Isaac's wife. Read the Scripture and you find that the uncle and the son of his sister are called brothers.<sup>12</sup> Once this principle is recognized, you will find that all the relatives of Mary are brothers of Christ.

3. But those disciples were more his brothers, because even those relatives would not be his brothers if they were not disciples, and they would be brothers without good reason if they did not acknowledge their brother as teacher. For in a certain passage, when it was announced to him that his mother and brothers were standing outside, but he was talking with his disciples, he said, "'Who is my mother or who are my brothers?' And stretching forth his hand over his disciples, he said,

nates a woman who is married and has had sexual experience, and *virgo* designates a woman of marriageable age but unmarried or a woman without sexual experience. While common usage allows some interchange between *femina* and *mulier*, *virgo* is usually carefully distinguished from *mulier*. The Latin versions of Scripture ignored this distinction and often used *mulier* where the Latin reader would have expected *virgo*; this could give rise to some theological misunderstandings; hence the care taken by Augustine here.

10. Cf. Gn 2.22.

11. Cf. Gn 11.27 and 31; 13.8; 14.14.

12. Cf. Gn 28.2; 29.12–15.

‘These are my brothers.’ and ‘Whoever shall do the will of my Father, he is my mother and brother and sister.’”<sup>13</sup>

(2) Therefore Mary also, because she did the Father’s will. It is this in her that the Lord has magnified, because she did the Father’s will, not because flesh begot flesh. Pay attention, my beloved people. For that very reason, when the Lord, working signs and prodigies and showing what lay hidden in his flesh, stirred admiration in the crowd, certain admiring souls said, “Happy is the womb that bore you.” And he said, “Rather, happy are they who hear the Word of God and keep it.”<sup>14</sup> This is to say, “And my mother whom you have called happy is happy for the reason that she keeps the Word of God, not that the Word was made flesh in her and dwelt among us,<sup>15</sup> but that she keeps the very Word of God through which she was made and which was made flesh in her.”

(3) Let men not rejoice in temporal offspring; let them exult if they are joined in spirit to God. We have said these things because of what the Evangelist said, that he dwelt with his mother and his brothers and disciples in Capharnaum for a few days.

4. What comes next? “And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and he went up to Jerusalem.” The Evangelist tells another thing, as it occurred to the memory of one who was proclaiming [the gospel]. “And he found in the temple them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and moneychangers, sitting. And when he had made a kind of scourge of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, also the oxen and the sheep, and he poured out the money of the changers and overturned the tables. And to them that sold the doves he said, “Take these things away from here, and do not make the house of my Father a house of business.””

(2) What have we heard, brothers? Look, that temple was still a symbol, and the Lord drove out of it all who were seeking their own goods, who had come to market. And what were those men selling there? What men needed in the sacrifices of

13. Cf. Mt 12.46–50; Mk 3.31–35.

14. Cf. Lk 11.27–28.

15. Cf. Jn 1.14.

that time. For you know, my beloved people, that such sacrifices were given to that people because of their carnality and the heart of stone still [in them], sacrifices by which they were to be kept from falling into idolatry. And they were offering sacrifices there, oxen, sheep, and doves. You know because you have read it. Therefore it was not a great sin if they were selling in the temple what was bought to be offered in the temple; and nevertheless he drove them out of it. What, if he found drunkards there, what would the Lord do, if he nevertheless drove out those selling what was lawful and not contrary to justice (for things which are honorably bought are not sold unlawfully), and did not allow the house of prayer to become a house of business?

(3) If the house of God ought not become a house of business, ought it to become a house of drinking? But when we say these things, they<sup>16</sup> gnash their teeth against us, and the Psalm which you heard comforts us: "They gnashed their teeth at me."<sup>17</sup> We know that we, too, hear how we may be healed, even though the scourges are repeated for Christ because what he said is also scourged. He says, "Scourges were gathered against me, and they did not know."<sup>18</sup> He was scourged with the scourges of the Jews; he is scourged with the blasphemies of false Christians; they multiply scourges for their Lord and they do not know. As far as he helps us, let us do this: "But as for me, when they were troublesome to me, I put on haircloth, and I humbled my soul with fasting."<sup>19</sup>

5. Nevertheless we are saying, brothers—for he also did not spare them; he who was to be scourged by them first—he showed us a certain sign because he made a scourge of ropes and with it he scourged the undisciplined who were doing business from the temple of God.

(2) For each and every man braids a rope for himself in his sins. The prophet says, "Woe to those who drag their sins like a long rope!"<sup>20</sup> Who makes the rope long? Who adds sin to

16. The Donatists. See *Tractate* 5.17 and note 42.

17. Cf. Ps 34.16.

18. Cf. Ps 34.15.

19. Cf. Ps 34.13.

20. Is 5.18 (LXX).

sin? How are sins added to sins? When the sins that have been committed are combined with other sins. He committed a theft; that no one may find out that he committed it, he seeks out an astrologer. It would be enough to have committed the theft; why do you want to join a sin to a sin? Look, two sins. When you are prevented from approaching the astrologer, you blaspheme the bishop. Look, three sins. When you hear, "Send him outside the Church," you say, "I'm taking myself to the party of Donatus." Look, you add a fourth [sin].

(3) The rope is growing; fear the rope. It is good for you that you are corrected here, when you are scourged with it that it might not be said in the end, "Bind his hands and feet, and cast him forth into the darkness outside."<sup>21</sup> For, "in the meshes of his own sins each man is held fast."<sup>22</sup> The Lord says the former; another Scripture says the latter. But the Lord is speaking in both instances. By their sins men are bound and are sent into the darkness outside.

6. Nevertheless, in order to seek the mystery of the deed in the figurative meaning, who are they who sell the oxen? Who are they who sell the sheep and doves? They are those who seek their own interests in the Church, not those of Jesus Christ.<sup>23</sup> They have everything for sale who do not wish to be redeemed. They do not wish to be bought; they do wish to sell. Yet surely it is good for them that they be redeemed by the blood of Christ, that they may attain the peace of Christ.

(2) For what profit is it to acquire anything temporal or transitory in this world, whether it be money, whether it be pleasure of stomach and gullet, whether it be honor in men's praise? Are not all things smoke and wind? Do not all things pass on, hasten by? And woe to them who will cling to passing things, for they pass with them! Are not all things a hurtling river racing to the sea? And woe to him who will fall, for he will be carried away into the sea! Therefore we ought to keep all our feelings away from such passionate desires.

(3) My brothers, they who seek such things sell them. For

21. Cf. Mt 22.13.

22. Cf. Prv 5.22.

23. Cf. Phil 2.21.

that Simon, too, wanted to buy the Holy Spirit for the very reason that he wanted to sell the Holy Spirit;<sup>24</sup> and he thought that the apostles were such merchants as the Lord drove out of the temple with a scourge. For he was such a man and wanted to buy what he might sell; he was of those who sell doves. For the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, brothers, they who sell doves, who are they except those who say, "We give the Holy Spirit"? Why do they say this and at what price do they sell? At the price of their own honor. They receive for a time bishops' seats<sup>26</sup> as their price, that they may seem to sell doves. Let them beware of the scourge of ropes. The dove is not for sale; it is given *gratis*, for it is called grace.<sup>27</sup>

(4) Therefore, my brothers, as you see that those who sell are hucksters, each one praises what he sells; how many sales' pitches have they made? Primianus has one sales' pitch at Carthage, Maximianus<sup>28</sup> has another; Rogatus<sup>29</sup> has another in Mauritania; and in Numidia this one and that one, there isn't time to name them all, have others.<sup>30</sup> Therefore someone

24. Cf. Acts 8.9–24; see also *Tractate* 6.18.

25. Cf. Jn 1.32; Mt 3.16; Mk 1.10; Lk 3.22.

26. The Latin word is *cathedras*; this is likely an allusion to Mt 21.12 where Jesus overturns the tables of the money-changers and the seats (*cathedras*) of those who sold doves.

27. Cf. *Tractate* 3.9.

28. Primian became the Donatist bishop of Carthage in 391 or 392 A.D. and instituted a policy of leniency for Donatist dissidents. One of his deacons, Maximian, objected to this policy and with the support of some other Donatist bishops challenged the validity of Primian's election. After grievous internal conflict a Donatist general council held at Bagai in April, 394 A.D., ruled against Maximian and excommunicated him. This decision was supported by the Roman governor of Africa, Gildo, in 397 A.D., and the Maximianist faction gradually dissipated. See Frend, *Donatist Church*, 213 ff.

29. Rogatus, the Donatist bishop of Cartenna, objecting to the drunken orgies of the Circumcellions and seeking the traditional purity of Donatism, based on non-violence, formed about 370 A.D. a separatist Donatist party called the Rogatists. It was always a small and uninfluential sect. See Frend, *Donatist Church*, 170 and 197.

30. Each faction of the Donatists claimed to have the one truly valid baptism. Cf. Augustine, *De Baptismo contra Donatistas* 1.6 (PL 43.113–114; and CSEL 51.153–154); *En in Ps* 36.2.18–23 (CCL 38.359–368; and ACW 30.287–304); *Epistula* 93.43–53 (PL 33.342–347; CSEL 34.486–496; and FOTC 18.96–106). See Berrouard, *Homélie I–XVI*, 910–911.

goes around to buy the dove; according to his own sales' pitch each one praises what he sells. Let that man's heart be turned away from every seller; let him come where [the dove] is received for free. Under these circumstances they do not blush, brothers, that they have caused so many factions among themselves by their very bitter and malicious quarrels when they attribute to themselves what they are not, when they are elated thinking that they are something whereas they are nothing.<sup>31</sup> But what has been fulfilled in them that they do not want to be corrected except what you heard in the Psalm, "They were separated and they did not feel remorse"?<sup>32</sup>

7. Who, then, sell oxen? Oxen are understood as those who have dispensed the Holy Scriptures to us. The oxen were the apostles, the oxen were the Prophets. Wherefore the Apostle says, "'You shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treads out the grain.' Is God concerned with oxen? Or does he say this for our sakes? He, in fact, says it for our sakes. For he who plows ought to plow in hope, and he who threshes, in the hope of partaking."<sup>33</sup> Therefore those oxen have left us the record of Scripture. For they did not dispense of their own because they sought the Lord's glory. For what did you hear in the same Psalm? "And let them who will the peace of his servant forever say, 'The Lord be magnified.'"<sup>34</sup>

(2) The servant of God, the people of God, the Church of God. They who will the peace of this Church, let them magnify the Lord, not the servant, "and let them forever say, 'The Lord be magnified.'" Who should say it? "They who will the peace of his servant." That was the clear voice of the people themselves, of the servant himself which you heard in the Psalm in lamentations; and you were moved when you heard it, because you are of them. What was sung by one resounded from every heart. Happy are they who recognized themselves

31. Cf. Gal 6.3.

32. This is part of Augustine's text for Ps 34.16: it appears identically in *En in Ps* 57.20.30 (CCL 39.726), although it is not quoted in *En in Ps* 34.2.8 (CCL 38.317). The *Vulgate* also gives this text with similar wording as part of verse 16 and in LXX it is part of verse 15.

33. Cf. 1 Cor 9.9–10, quoting Dt 25.4 (NAB 9.8–10).

34. Cf. Ps 34.27.

in those words as in a mirror. Who, then, are they who will the peace of his servant, the peace of his people, the peace of the one that he calls "the only one"<sup>35</sup> and that he wishes to be rescued from the lion: "Rescue my only one from the hand of the dog"?<sup>36</sup> They, who forever say, "The Lord be magnified."

(3) Therefore those oxen magnified the Lord, not themselves. See the ox magnifying his Lord because the ox has acknowledged his owner;<sup>37</sup> observe the ox fearing that the ox's owner may be deserted and confidence be placed in the ox. How he is terrified of those who want to put hope in him! "Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"<sup>38</sup> What I gave, I did not give. You received it free; the dove descended from heaven. "I," he says, "have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase."<sup>39</sup> And let them who will the peace of his servant forever say, "The Lord be magnified."

8. But those men deceive the people from the Scriptures themselves so that they may receive honors and praises from them and that men may not be converted to the truth. Indeed because with the very Scriptures they deceive the people, from whom they seek honors, they sell the oxen; they also sell the sheep, that is, the people themselves. And to whom do they sell except to the devil? For truly, my brothers, if the Church is Christ's only one,<sup>40</sup> and is one, who takes away whatever is cut off from it except that lion, roaring and going about, seeking someone whom he may devour?<sup>41</sup> Woe to those who are cut off, for [the Church] shall remain whole! For "the Lord knows who are his."<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, as far as they can, they sell the oxen and the sheep; they sell the doves, too; let them watch out for the scourge of their sins.

(2) Surely when they suffer some such thing for those iniquitous

35. Cf. Ps 34.17. The Latin *unica*, only one, is a Hebraism for the soul. See Blaise, 857.

36. Cf. Ps 21.21.

38. 1 Cor 1.13; cf. *Tractate* 5.7.

40. See note 35.

42. 2 Tm 2.19.

37. Cf. Is 1.3.

39. 1 Cor 3.6-7; cf. *Tractate* 5.15.

41. Cf. 1 Pt 5.8 and section 1.

uities of theirs, let them acknowledge that the Lord made a scourge of ropes and that he warns them to change, not to be traders. For if they do not change, in the end they will hear, "Bind *their* hands and feet and cast *them* forth into the darkness outside."<sup>43</sup>

9. "And then the disciples remembered that it was written, 'The zeal for your house has eaten me up.'"<sup>44</sup> For by zeal for the house of God the Lord cast those men out of the temple. Brothers, let each and every Christian in the members of Christ be consumed with zeal for God's house. Who is consumed with zeal for God's house? He who strives that all things which he, perhaps, sees are wicked there be corrected, [who] desires that they be improved, [who] does not keep quiet. If he cannot improve it, he suffers, he moans. The grain is not shaken out elsewhere than on the threshing-floor; it puts up with the chaff that it may enter the storehouse when the chaff has been separated. You, if you are grain, do not be shaken out elsewhere than on the threshing-floor in front of the storehouse, that you may not be picked up by birds before you are gathered into the store-house. For the birds of the sky, the powers on high, are on the watch to snatch something from the threshing-floor, and they snatch only what has been shaken out from there. Therefore let zeal for God's house consume you; let zeal for God's house, in which house of God he is a member, consume each and every Christian. For your house is not preferable to the house where you have eternal salvation.

(2) You enter your house for temporal rest; you enter God's house for eternal rest. Therefore if you strive that nothing wicked happen in your house, in God's house where salvation and rest without end have been set forth, ought you, as far as you can, to suffer it if, perchance, you see anything wicked? For example, do you see a brother hurrying to the theater? Stop him, admonish him, show yourself saddened for him, if zeal for God's house consumes you. Do you see others hurrying and wanting to get drunk, and wanting this in holy places—

43. Cf. Mt 22.13.

44. Jn 2.17, quoting Ps 68.10.

a thing which is nowhere proper? Stop those whom you can; hold back those whom you can; frighten those whom you can; flatter those whom you can; but don't keep quiet. Is he a friend? Let him be gently admonished. Is she a wife? Let her be bridled with the utmost severity. Is she a servant? Let her be restrained, even with blows. Do whatever you can according to the role that you play; and you accomplish, "The zeal for your house has consumed me."

(3) But if you are cold, languid, looking to yourself alone, and as if sufficient to yourself, and saying in your heart, "What concern of mine is it to care about the sins of others? My soul is enough for me; may I keep it whole for God." Say now, does there not come to your mind that servant who hid the talent and refused to use it?<sup>45</sup> For was he reproached because he lost it and not because he kept it without gain?

(4) Therefore, my brothers, listen so that you may not remain quiet. I am going to give advice to you; let him who is within give it, because, although he gives through me, he gives it. You know what each one of you does in his own house with a friend, with a tenant, with his own client, with an older person, with a younger person.<sup>46</sup> As God gives access, as he opens the door to his word, do not stop trying to gain for Christ as you were gained by Christ.

10. "The Jews said to him, 'What sign do you show to us, seeing that you do these things?' And the Lord, "'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'Forty-six years has this temple been in building, and do you say, in three days I will raise it up?'" They were flesh; they knew things of the flesh. But he was speaking spiritually. And who could understand what temple he was speaking about? But we have not far to seek. Through the Evangelist he made it clear to us; he mentioned what temple he was speaking about. "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." "Forty-six years the temple has been in building and will you raise it up in three days?" "But," says the Evangelist, "he was speaking about the temple of his body."

45. Cf. Mt 25.14-30; Lk 19.11-27.

46. Or, "with someone greater in rank, with someone inferior in rank."

(2) And it is clear that the Lord was killed and rose again after three days. This is now known to all of us; even if it was concealed from the Jews because they stand outside, still it has been opened to us because we know in whom we believe.<sup>47</sup> We are soon to celebrate, in annual solemnity, the destruction and rebuilding of this temple.<sup>48</sup> And we urge you to prepare yourselves for it, if any of you are catechumens, that you may receive grace. Right now is the time; right now let that be in labor which then may be born. Well then, this we know.

11. But perhaps we are asked this question, whether the temple built in forty-six years has any mystical significance. There are indeed many things which could be said about this; but for the time being I say what can be said briefly and understood easily.

(2) Brothers, we have already said yesterday,<sup>49</sup> if I am not mistaken, that Adam was one man and that he likewise is the whole human race; for so we said if you remember. As if he had been broken and scattered, he is being gathered together and, so to speak, fused into one by spiritual union and harmony. And Adam himself, as one man, now poor, moans for a time,<sup>50</sup> but is renewed in Christ because an Adam has come without sin that he might destroy Adam's sin in his flesh and that Adam might restore the image of God to himself. From Adam, therefore, is Christ's flesh; from Adam, therefore, is the temple which the Jews destroyed and the Lord raised up again in three days. For he raised up again his flesh.

(3) See that he was God, equal with the Father. My brothers, the Apostle says, "who raised him from the dead."<sup>51</sup> About whom is he speaking? About the Father. He says, "He became obedient unto death, even to death on a cross. For which cause, God also has raised him from the dead, and has given him the name which is above every name."<sup>52</sup> The Lord was raised up again and exalted. He raised him up again. Who?

47. Cf. 2 Tm 1.12.

48. I.e., at Easter.

49. Cf. *Tractate* 9.10 and 14.

50. Cf. the opening sentence of the *Tractate*, referring especially to Ps 34.10 and 14.

51. Cf. Gal 1.1.: Col 2.12.

52. Cf. Phil 2.8-9.

The Father, to whom he said in the Psalms, "Raise me up, and I shall requite them."<sup>53</sup> Therefore the Father raised him up again. Did he not [raise] himself [up]? But what does the Father do without the Word? What does the Father do without his only one? For hear that he also was God: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Did he say, "Destroy the temple which the Father will raise up in three days"? But just as when the Father raises up, the Son, too, raises up; so also when the Son raises up, the Father, too, raises up, because the Son said, "I and the Father are one."<sup>54</sup>

12. What then does the number forty-six mean? Meanwhile, you already heard yesterday that in the four Greek letters of the four Greek words Adam himself extends throughout the whole world.<sup>55</sup> For if you were to write those four words one under the other, that is, the names of the four parts of the world, east, west, north, south, which is the whole world (wherefore the Lord said that he would gather his elect from the four winds when he came to judgment),<sup>56</sup> for if you were to use the four Greek names, *anatolē* which is east, *dýsis* which is west, *árktos* which is north, *mesēmbria* which is south, *anatolē*, *dýsis*, *árktos*, *mesēmbria*, the first letters of the words make Adam.

(2) How then do we find there the number forty-six also? Because the flesh of Christ is from Adam. The Greeks reckon [numbers] from letters. What we make the letter A, they in their language call "alpha", and alpha is number one. When they write "beta", which is their B, in numbers, it is called, in numbers, two. When they write "gamma", it is called, in their numbers, three. When they write "delta", it is called, in their numbers, four; and so they express numbers by all the letters [of the alphabet]. What we call M and they call "my" signifies forty; for they call "my" *tessarakonta*. Now see what number those letters make and you will find that the temple was built in forty-six years. For Adam has an alpha which is one; it has a delta which is four. You have five. It has an alpha again which is one; you have six. It also has a my which is forty; you have

53. Cf. Ps 40.11.

55. Cf. *Tractate* 9.14.

54. Jn 10.30.

56. Cf. Mk 13.27.

forty-six. This, my brothers, was said also by our earlier predecessors<sup>57</sup> and this number forty-six was found in the letters.<sup>58</sup>

(3) And because our Lord, Jesus Christ, received his body from Adam, [but] did not take the sin of Adam—he took his bodily temple from him, not the iniquity which must be driven from the temple—but this flesh which he took from Adam (for Mary was from Adam and the Lord's flesh from Mary) the Jews crucified; and he was going to raise up this same flesh in three days which they were going to kill on the cross. They destroyed the temple built in forty-six years; and he raised it up again in three days.

13. We bless the Lord, our God, who has assembled us for spiritual joy. Let us always live with humble hearts, and let our joy be with him. Let us not be puffed up by any prosperity of this world, but let us know that our happiness is only when those things have passed away. Now, my brothers, let our joy be in hope; let no one rejoice as if in his present possessions, that he may not be held fast on the road. Let all our joy come from hope for the future, let all our desire be for eternal life. Let every sigh be a panting after Christ. Let that most beautiful one, who loved even the ugly that he might make them beautiful, let him be longed for. Hurry to him alone, sigh for him. "And they who will the peace of his servant forever say, 'Let the Lord be magnified.'" <sup>59</sup>

57. Cf., e.g., Pseudo-Cyprian, *De Montibus Sina et Sinon*. 4 (PL 4.992–993).

58. For a different interpretation of this number 46, see Augustine, *De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII*. 56 (CCL 44A.95–96; and FOTC 70.98).

59. Ps 34.27.

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 are indicated at  
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 each *Tractate* and  
 are not included  
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11.29: 6.15(1)  
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1.29: 5.14(1); 7.8  
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